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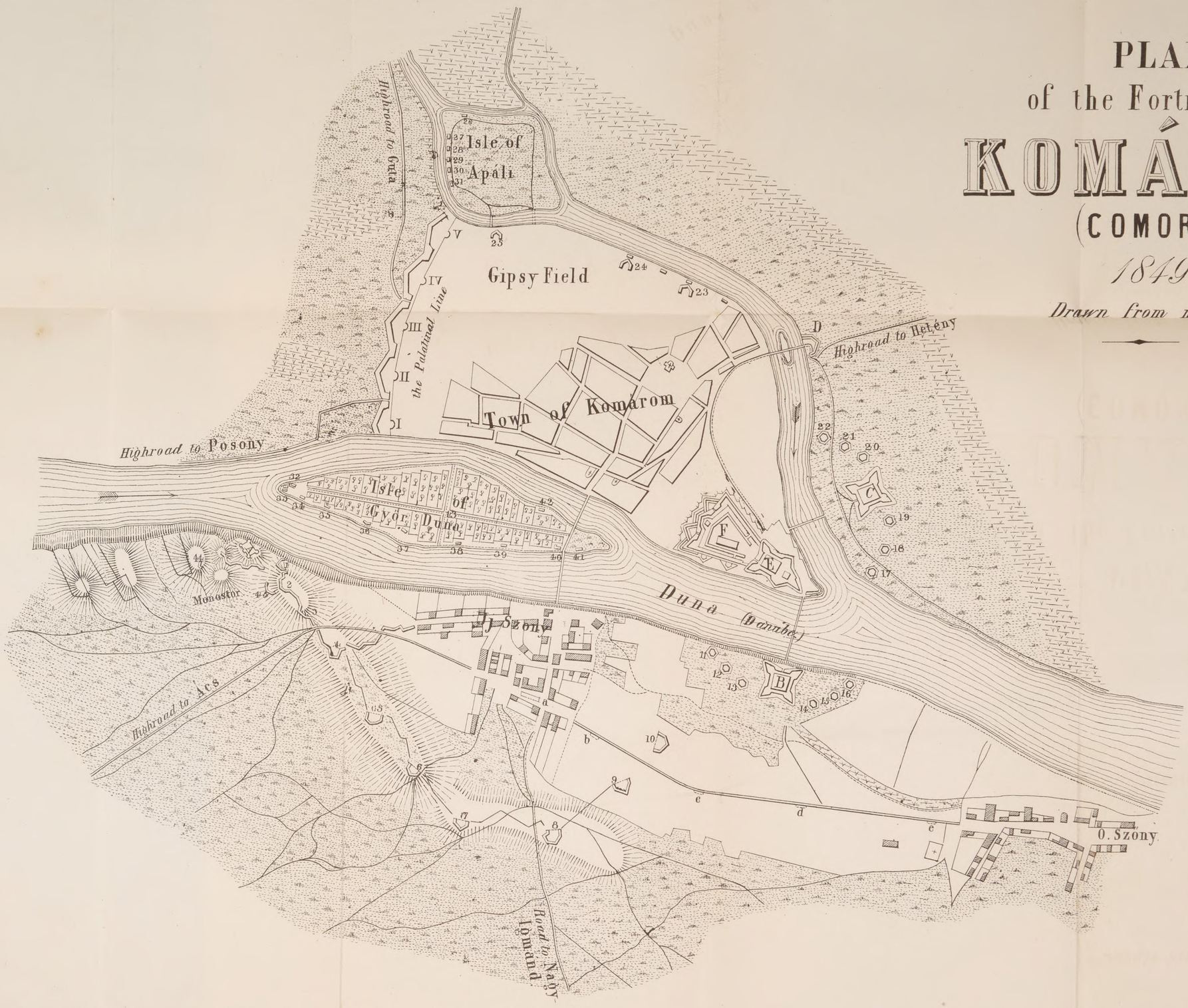
THE

FORTRESS OF KOMÁROM.

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PLAN
of the Fortress of
KOMÁROM
(COMORN)
1849.

Drawn from memory.



COLONEL THALY, DELT.

M. & N. HANHART, LITH. IMP.

THE

FORTRESS OF KOMÁROM

(COMORN),

DURING THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE IN HUNGARY IN 1848–1849.

BY

COLONEL SIGISMUND THALY,

LATE DIRECTOR OF FORTIFICATIONS IN KOMÁROM.

TRANSLATED BY

WILLIAM RUSHTON, M.A.

OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON.

With a Plan of the Fortress.

LONDON:

JAMES MADDEN, 8, LEADENHALL STREET.

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1852.

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STATE OF KOMÁROM (COMORN),

IN THE YEARS 1848 & 1849.

In the southern angle of the fertile island of Csalloköz (Schütt), formed by the branching arms of the mighty Danube, which divides itself into two rivers below Posony (Presburg), and at the confluence of those gigantic streams with the waters of the Waag and the Nyitra (Neutra) stands Komárom (Comorn), upon a wide plain which is not commanded by any neighbouring heights: and as the fortress has been built according to the most approved rules of military science, it thus combines the greatest advantages both of nature and of art.

From its position upon the main river of the country, on the road leading from the capital of Austria to that of Hungary, having

means of communication with each bank of the river, along which runs the high road to Vienna, following the course of the stream, Komárom (Comorn) is justly considered the key of Upper Hungary, in like manner as Péter-várad (Peterwardein) which looks down from a towering height upon the waters of the Danube in another part of the country, is called the key of the south.

Even before the fortress of Komárom possessed the extended works which it does at present, in the time of the long Turkish wars, it was equally regarded by friends and foes as an impregnable bulwark; and its ancient fame is appropriately represented upon one of the walls by the figure of a virgin, who holds a fig in her left hand, and scornfully presents it to the besieger who shall be bold or cunning enough to overcome her.

The subsequent improvements made in its fortifications guaranteed the fortress against almost all the attacks which even modern science can bring to bear upon besieged places; and the greatest captain of our age, Napoleon himself, dared not to risk his military renown upon such a hazardous undertaking, as he felt

the siege and attempted capture of Comorn would assuredly prove.

Now, in pursuance of a law sanctioned on the 11th of April, 1848, at Posony (Presburg), by King Ferdinand V., the country recovered its old though recently injured right of self-government. The new and independent Hungarian ministry was called upon to conduct every part of the public administration in Hungary; and all the various troops which were in the country, as well as all the fortresses and strongholds, came under the power of the Hungarian minister at war.

But as in almost every department of the administration, so more particularly in that of war, there was manifested, during the earlier months of Hungarian independence, a fatal short-sightedness and want of energy in the measures, or rather half-measures, which were taken. Instead of being careful to establish an independent national defence, and to hand over the fortresses to trustworthy commanders, the Hungarian government was satisfied with requiring an oath of fidelity and obedience from the troops, mostly foreigners, who happened to be in the country, and from the Imperial

governors of the Austrian garrisons; such an oath is doubtless a holy and almost superfluous engagement as regards men of honour, but without end, aim, or power to bind hirelings, whose highest law is blind obedience to their masters, even when the latter are steeped in perjury, or guilty of open treachery.

For a long time the Hungarian ministry rocked itself and the nation to sleep with the pernicious delusion, that the Austrian court meant honestly by Hungary and its new form of government. Nay, even when every proof to the contrary was clear as daylight, the government hesitated for a while longer to adopt the necessary measures against the hypocritical treachery of Austria.

And so it was, that when, upon the 6th of October, Ferdinand V. published a manifesto declaring Hungary in a state of rebellion, the governors of the garrisons of Károlfehèvár (Carlsburg), Arad, and Temesvar renounced obedience to the Hungarian ministry, and set themselves in a posture of defiance.

A mere chance saved Komárom from the same fate. But before giving further details about this event, we must acquaint our

readers with circumstances which had taken place previously in the fortress; and thus we will give a complete picture of the events which transpired from the time when the fortress was formally occupied by the Hungarian government, to the period when it was again given up to the Austrians.

The official position which the writer occupied, as Local Director of the fortifications, will be a warrant for the truth of this narrative; and although that honourable employ was not committed to him until 1849, yet the statements which he advances respecting the earlier period may be received with equal confidence.

With the exception of a few weeks during which the writer fought under Perczel and Görgey against the enemy, he remained and laboured in Komárom, first as captain in the national guard, and afterwards as Honvéd officer, from the first days of the Hungarian Revolution, or, as it might be better termed, War of Independence, even to the end of the same.

Nevertheless, it may be that, for want of some original documents, the present work will be deemed by some as not sufficiently precise

in strict military or professional reports, a disadvantage which, under the circumstances, could not be obviated. However, even if professional men do not find herein all the data which they might expect, they may rest assured of the accuracy with which every fact will be laid before them.

Enough will be said, not only to give a general view of the scene and the actors, but also to furnish means of forming a correct judgment upon the events described. Besides, it must be confessed, that these lines are not written merely or chiefly to please the critics, but as a contribution to the annals of modern Hungarian history.

SECTION I.

KOMÁROM (COMORN) UNTIL THE TIME OF THE FIRST SIEGE.

SCARCELY had the solemn oath, confirming the new laws, passed the lips of the Hungarian king, when his court and cabinet laid plans for destroying the recently established independence of the country. But while Italy was in open revolt; while the capital (Vienna) assumed a threatening attitude, and the whole Austrian monarchy gave tokens of revolutionary agitation, the Court dared not attack, with open force, a nation enthusiastically devoted to the defence of its rights. The jealousy of the various nationalities which had been systematically fomented by the government, and more particularly so since the recent agitation for Reform in Hungary, seemed to the Court a very appropriate means for gaining its devilish ends. Jealousy was to be stung into hatred,

and hatred pricked on, until it led to open war. This undertaking, under the direction of an ambitious woman, the Archduchess Sophia, was immediately commenced and carried out. The Hungarian government, which was simple enough to take its own honourable feeling as the standard for judging the proceedings of the Austrian court, did not discover the prime mover of the tempest which was gathering heaven-high over the land. But the Cabinet at Vienna was not slow to see this blinded innocence and almost paradisiacal simplicity of the Hungarian rulers. Under the pretence that a disproportionate quantity of military stores was kept in the Hungarian fortresses, the Austrian War minister demanded from his colleague beyond the Leitha, all their "supernumerary" bombshells. An order from the Hungarian War minister enjoined the commander of Komárom to obey that requisition. The latter officer, an old Lieutenant-Field-marshal in the Imperial service, fulfilled the order with such hearty goodwill, that he sent to Vienna not only the surplus bombshells, but also necessary projectiles and balls, so that, during the first siege in winter,

the fortress had not more than 8,000 balls (18 and 24 pounders) and 4,000 bombshells.

In close and secret unison with the Austrian war ministry, the governors of fortresses did all they could to shirk and tamper with the orders which were sent, from time to time, by the Hungarian government. And if by chance their ill-concealed disobedience was in any way discovered, the chivalrous gentlemen had always various reasons cut and dried, to allege in excuse for their traitorous dealing. The impunity with which these criminal acts, or the no less criminal instances of negligence were allowed to pass, appeared admirably calculated to encourage new attempts of a like kind. In obedience to a suggestion from Vienna, Lieutenant Fieldmarshal März, the governor of Komárom wished to secure the fortress under his command to the Emperor of Austria. Accordingly one day, before any one could tell what he was going to do, General März ordered the gates to be shut, and the artillery to be directed against the town; "I and my cats," he is reported to have said, pointing to his great guns, "will spit a hellish fire." But, luckily, the worthy general,

in his zeal for the service, had forgotten to reflect that neither his garrison nor his provisions were sufficient to stand a siege. Hence he was soon obliged to open the gates again, and promise, upon his honour as a soldier, to undertake nothing for the future, without consent of the Hungarian government, or at least without consulting the town council of Komárom. That he endeavoured to justify the sudden closing of the fortress, and that he was visited with no punishment, will be a matter of no surprise to our readers, but rather an additional instance of the infatuation which possessed the ministry, and of their extreme desire not to break with the Austrian court. But that this case did not serve as a warning to our statesmen, and that they could still allow one of the most costly jewels in the country to remain in more than suspicious hands, is indeed a thing very hard to account for.

Meanwhile in Italy the fortune of war turned in favour of Radetzky, and, besides a threatened rising among the Servians, a numerous army of Croats, under Jellachich,* was every day

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* Pronounced *Yellashitch*.

upon the point of invading Hungary. At the first approach of these dangers, the Batthyány ministry began to think of taking more active measures for the securing Komárom. But, instead of doing this in a bold, straightforward manner, by removing unfaithful officers and dismissing part of the troops, the government pursued its object indirectly, ever fearing to do any thing which might bring down a declaration of war from the Imperial court; this policy was called prudence by many, who considered merely the near approach of danger and the meagre preparations for a defensive war; but it argued great neglect on the part of the government, since they had not improved the early months of their independent administration to organise a proper defence, and to take those precautions in case of certain eventualities, which a wise foresight would not and could not have left unnoticed.

The head of the then existing cabinet, and perhaps the chief representative of the policy just mentioned, was Count Louis Batthyány, who has since sealed his patriotism with his blood. And however sincerely we pay the tribute of our gratitude to the love which he

bore to our fatherland, yet historical truth demands that we should censure the faults committed by him in the conduct of affairs. The proverb *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* can have no weight with the student of history. Truth, and truth alone, must be his load-star.

In order, then, to test the probabilities of the case, an order came down from the government, that the garrison should be reinforced by a division of national guards from Esztergom (Gran) under Major Besze. In spite of all efforts made by the latter, as well as by the town council of Komárom, General März refused the national guard admission into the inner fortress, and quartered them in the outworks, in the so-called Palatinal lines,* alleging the danger of a conflict between troops of different arms. As these outworks were not, at that time, fully complete, and could be bombarded from the walls of the inner fortress, both Besze and the authorities of the town invoked the speedy interference of the ministry; and it was ordered that suspected troops, belonging to

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* Afterwards called the "Kossuth lines."

foreign nationalities, as Galicians and Italians, should be removed.*

Their place was supplied, according to an order from President Batthyány, by a battalion of the Turszky regiment, the men of which were mostly Hungarians, though the officers were of Croatian race, and this battalion alone garrisoned the inner fortress. At the same time, it was determined to form a division of volunteers in the county of Komárom. Count Paul Esterházy (who was a major in the national guards) and I, went from place to place, calling the young men to arms. In a few days, we had recruited about six hundred youths, in little more than a quarter of that small county. From the whole of the county about sixteen hundred volunteers offered themselves for the defence of their fatherland, and the whole term of the war. But as, in consequence of a supplementary ordinance, the cost of equipment and the earnest-money had to be advanced by the county, and as the latter, from its small extent, was not able to supply

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* Most of the Italian regiments stationed in Hungary afterwards fought for the national cause.

the necessary funds for all the volunteers who presented themselves, the number was reduced to four hundred and fifty men, who were shortly provided with clothes, and were destined to reinforce the garrison of Komárom. However, before the men were brought together, a company of Esztergom (Gran) volunteers, fully equipped and armed, came up, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen Majthényi. In this case also, Lieutenant-General März refused permission to quarter in the fortress. The question still remained unresolved between the governor and the ministry, when suddenly an unforeseen circumstance cut the untied knot.

The president of the ministry had caused foreign regiments to collect around the capital;* and this circumstance gave the people very just reason for anxiety. In order to allay this disquietude, the president commanded that the cavalry should march to the northern counties, while the infantry of the "Wilhelm" regiment (Galicians) should go by steamer to Vienna. The commander of

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* Buda-Pesth.

the latter troops, having a private understanding with General März, wanted to compel the captain of the steamboat to land them at Komárom. But the captain, a brave Italian, alleged the order which he had received from Batthyány; and when the officer in command tried to browbeat him, said boldly, that he would rather blow his ship into the air, than act contrary to orders. Meanwhile, the townspeople of Komárom had learnt the intentions of the governor, and required him to give up his illegal purpose, otherwise the population would oppose him by force of arms. This threat had probably more weight, from the fact that a couple of cannon were in the hands of the national guard; and thus the traitorous hireling was obliged to try and gain his ends in another way. He privately gave notice to the commander of the Wilhelm infantry, that he must give way for a moment, and land in Gönyö; but, when once there, instead of marching to Vienna, he must come back by night, and so enter the fortress. The hostile troops effected their landing at the specified place on the other side of the Danube, five

miles above Komárom; and early in the morning of the 16th September an order came, that the next night they must go back in all haste to the fortress. But a remarkable accident frustrated their evil designs.

Major Kosztolányi, commander of the national guard volunteers on the other side of the Danube, had called the volunteers of the town of Komárom to aid in transporting some cannon from Gönyö to Pápa. Three young men of this division, Corporal Kollár with his two comrades Munk and Korányi, were taking refreshment in the inn at Gönyö; and, sitting at the same table with some soldiers of the Wilhelm regiment, overheard them talking about the secret plan with which our readers are already acquainted. Kollár, whose name deserves a place in history, immediately hired a coach, and drove as quickly as possible to Komárom, in order to inform the town authorities of the secret plans designed by the Austrians.

The municipal authorities at once sat in council, took measures for removing the bridge, and determined to repel force by force. Scarcely had the bridge been removed, when the unin-

vited guests appeared upon the opposite bank. Words are not adequate to express their astonishment, when they found themselves so near their object, and yet unable to cross the stream. They stood upon the bank, gnashing their teeth with rage, and swearing to be revenged upon the town. At all events, public opinion ascribed to the disappointed vengeance of these mercenaries, the origin of that devastating fire which, soon after, during a gale of wind, broke out in the town, and converted the greater part of it, about eight hundred to one thousand houses, into a heap of ruins. And here it may not be improper to say a word or two about the town of Komárom, as in the sequel it was called upon to play an important and most honourable part on the stage of the war's history.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the old, and so-called inner fortress, within the Palatinal, or Kossuth lines as they were afterwards termed, stood the town: hence in case of siege, it must necessarily share all the dangers and hardships consequent upon a hostile attack. About this time it numbered 18,000 inhabitants, most of whom were Hungarians

by birth, who enjoyed great commercial prosperity, particularly by trading in wood and corn, who were animated by a spirit of ardent patriotism, were ready to make great sacrifices for the national cause, and were staunch friends of the popular interest.

The municipal council was composed of respectable men, chosen by free election, who set a good example to their fellow-citizens; and by virtue of the Constitution, which was based upon and supported by public opinion, they exercised a wholesome influence upon the fate of the fortress itself, which was thus bound up in strict connection with the destinies of the town. And as the timely, energetic measures of the citizens in Komárom saved the fortress from falling into traitorous hands, so in the course of events we shall have to notice many signal instances of patriotism, which will excite the admiration of posterity. We do no more than pay our just homage to truth, when we confess, that in conjunction with the bravery of our troops, the excellent spirit and self-sacrifice of the townspeople maintained and defended the fortress of Komárom.

The fire had laid low the greater part of that once flourishing town. By a praise-worthy impulse of gratitude the Assembly of Representatives did not hesitate to lend, without interest, from the State treasury, the sum of 300,000 florins, C. M.* for the purpose of building up again that part of the town which had suffered. In consequence of this valuable assistance, within a few months new roofs were put upon the blackened and branded walls, so that the hapless inhabitants had again a place of refuge, until a new misfortune unroofed them for a second time, though even then, without extinguishing their faithful zeal for the defence of their country.† After this necessary digression, we resume the thread of our narrative.

When the threatening danger had been averted by the removal of the bridge, couriers were sent to inform the government of these circumstances, and to demand that the governor, now so clearly guilty of treason, should be punished; other needful measures of defence were likewise strongly urged upon the

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* 300,000 florins, *Conventions-Münze*, are about £30,000.

† During the siege, this loan was repaid by the town,

attention of the ministry. Besides this, the town council visited General März at midnight, and bitterly reproached him with want of faith, inasmuch as he had solemnly promised to undertake nothing without the advice of the municipal authorities. The detected criminal behaved himself, in the first instance, with violence, and gave way to feelings of insolent rage; but, when he began to feel his own helplessness, he had recourse to an unmanly subterfuge, and pretended that he had sanctioned the entrance of the battalion in question, merely for the sake of his personal safety, which, according to his own account, was in danger, because he could have no confidence in the existing garrison.

Whatever may have been the motives which influenced the ministry, true it is, that the governor of the fortress, even after these striking instances of treachery, despite the interpellations which took place in the Assembly of Representatives, was not only *not* brought before a court-martial, but actually allowed to remain in command of the citadel: this is one of the many inexplicable questions, to which nothing but the strange indecision of the then

prevailing policy can afford the shadow of an answer.

The Austrians, being unable to cross the river, encamped in the outworks, and when they were tired of laying waste the adjoining vineyards, they were obliged, after two days of hunger and disappointment, to set off towards Vienna. General März, losing all hope of compassing his ends, consented to obey Batthyány's order, and allowed the Esztergom (Gran) volunteers, under Lieutenant-Colonel Majthényi, to occupy the inner fortress. They were followed upon the 21st of September by the Komárom volunteers; so that now the fortress had the following garrison:—

1 Battalion of the Turszky regiment	-	450	men.
1 Division of Komárom (Comorn) volunteers		420	,,
1 Company of do.	do.	200	,,
	Total,	1,070	men.

Besides, there was a company of Honvéd artillery under their captain, George Klapka, and the artillery belonging to the old Austrian garrison. Henceforward General März was governor merely in name, for the real power

had passed over into the hands of Lieutenant-Colonel Mathényi. A few days afterwards a company of volunteers from Pesth (Pesti Csatárok) 200 strong, marched up under Captain Zoftsák.

The time seemed now to have arrived, when it was possible to attempt, with success, an expurgation of the old garrison, that is to say a removal of untrustworthy individuals, and particularly the officers of the Turszky battalion. As soon as the Komárom volunteers had entered, we endeavoured by their aid to sound the Turszky infantry, which still remained under the old Austrian standards. The members of this corps, being mostly Hungarians by birth, expressed the warmest sympathy for the popular cause, and promised that, as soon as they were freed from their Croatian officers, they would speak out plainly.

A favourable opportunity soon presented itself. A new ordinance of the government required every soldier to take the oath of allegiance to the Constitution; and officers were, moreover, bound to give a written promise of obedience. As soon as the ordinance arrived,

the governor assembled the whole body of officers in his official residence. For the first and last time, we were now sitting together in council with the *black-yellow** officers. All present stated that they were ready to take the prescribed oath. März declared, most solemnly, that he would defend the fortress against Jellachich or any one else, even against the imperial Austrian troops, unless the aggressors had an order from the king himself, counter-signed by a Hungarian minister, commanding him to open the gates.

In accordance with this unanimous feeling, the whole garrison was drawn up next morning before the governor's residence. The commanding general called upon the officers to step forward and consult with him upon the proper manner of taking the oath. They decidedly refused to swear in presence of the troops, and requested permission to perform the ceremony in the hall of the governor's house.

On that day it was Captain Thalÿ's duty to

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* Yellow striped with black is the Austrian colour: hence the Austrians are sometimes called *Die Schwartz-gelber*, or "the black-yellowers."

regulate the ordinary guard-service of the inner fortress. When, therefore, he perceived that Lieutenant-Colonel Majthényi seemed ready to grant this perfidious request of the imperial officers, he upon his own responsibility charged a lieutenant to take a file of his company, and, with drums beating, to go and fetch the national colours. The Turszky battalion, which was still standing under the old Austrian standards, had no sooner seen the three-coloured flag, than they ran to the new standards, one and all, with the exception of the subalterns, who were mostly Croats or Austrians. The officers and subalterns, after having bound themselves, by reversing arms, not to fight against Hungary, were directed to leave the fortress immediately. When this battalion went over, the imperialist governor lost all shadow of hope; and soon after, in the full conviction of his helplessness, he resigned the command to Majthényi, alleging his old age and growing infirmities as an excuse, in the presence of the assembled officers. But instead of going to some watering-place for the benefit of his health, as was generally reported, "this faithful servant" betook himself to Vienna.

In spite of the advantages thus obtained, the fortress was far from being in a satisfactory condition. For except what fell under the immediate care of Joseph Sàrközÿ, the government commissioner, most departments of the internal administration were in suspicious hands; even the stores of ammunition being held by the Austrian artillery. Besides which, the outworks were, for the most part, not mounted with cannon. The feeble number of troops in the garrison might be excused by the fact that no very pressing danger was at hand from any side. But the government was hardly justified in ordering that even a part of this small corps should be dispatched against Jellachich, in the expectation that it should be present at the engagement which shortly afterwards took place near Pákozd. Hence Captain Klapka laid such weighty reasons to the contrary before the council of war, that he persuaded the officers to set aside the order which had come down. For if the first battle had turned out to our disadvantage, the defeated troops might not have been able to fall back upon Komàrom (Comorn), and the fortress must have fallen into the power of the

enemy. This disobedience to orders was, no doubt, of and by itself blameable; but it was approved in the result; and that no dishonourable motives influenced the council of war, was shown by the warlike ardour which the garrison manifested in eagerly demanding permission to sally and attack the enemy's flank, when the latter were retreating from Pákozd to Györ (Raab). The decided disapproval of some officers, and particularly of Colonel Majthényi, checked the ardent desires of the troops upon that occasion.

While the garrison were rejoicing at the victory obtained by their brethren near Pákozd, not without regret that they themselves had been debarred from sharing in that engagement, a document to the following effect was brought into the fortress:—

"The Commander of the Croatian-Sclavonic army to Stephen Majthényi, Colonel and Governor of Komárom (Comorn).

"*Head Quarters, at Ovár (Altenburg),*
"*6th October*, 1848.

"Enclosed you will receive a letter from the Imperial war minister at Vienna. From the tenor of the same, which has been also communicated to me

by the Imperial ministry, as well as from the manifestoes which are added, you will learn the supreme will of his Imperial Majesty. And I hereby summon you, as you respect your honour and your duty, to obey this supreme order, to comply with all my demands, and thus avert the serious consequences for which you would be inevitably responsible, in case of opposition. Send me a report of your decision, and an account of the condition of your troops.

"JELLACHICH."

The document enclosed was pretty much as follows:—

"To Colonel Stephen Majthényi, Governor of Komárom

"*Vienna*, 5*th October*, 1848.

"It has come to my knowledge, Mr. Colonel, that you have been entrusted with the command of Komárom by the Royal Hungarian War Ministry. Enclosed, I send you a supreme manifesto of his Imperial Majesty, which appeared upon the 3rd October; after reading which, you, as an officer conscious of what is due to your sovereign, cannot hesitate for a moment upon the line of conduct to be taken.

"I, therefore, command you to open the gates of the fortress to his Excellency Lieutenant-Fieldmarshal the Ban of Croatia, or to any troops sent by him; and in dutiful obedience to the will of his Majesty, to

place yourself and your troops under the orders of his Excellency.

"If Colonel Majthényi should in anywise demur to comply with this summons, he would incur the gravest responsibility, and have to thank himself alone for the consequences.

"LATOUR,
"*Imperial War Minister.*"

Colonel Majthényi, of course, gave a negative answer, and sent the letters to the Hungarian government.

The next few weeks were chiefly employed in exercising, arming, and organising the recruits.

On the 19th October, Louis Kossuth, president of the Committee of Defence, was expected. As the force of circumstances had overthrown the former irresolute cabinet, and constituted in its room a Provisional Government, with Kossuth at the head, a new spirit animated all public measures, new life circulated in the body politic, hope and confidence beamed in every eye, where previously doubt and mistrust had reigned.

At noon, salutes of artillery greeted the approach of the steamer, which at length had

on board a trusty anchor; not, indeed, one capable of steadying the vessel which floated at ease upon the calm waters of the Danube, but one that could rescue the ship of state now fast hurrying on to meet the tempest.

The intention of the President's visit was to assure himself of the state of Komárom, and the real means of defence in the place or neighbourhood, in order that he might collect, and lead in person, a reinforcement for the relief of the army from Vienna, which was encamped on the Austrian frontier.

Thousands of cheers (*éljen*) welcomed the celebrated patriot as he landed. He was received by Colonel Majthényi in the name of the military, and by the Burgomaster Eugene Antmann on behalf of the town-population. Majthényi, in his address, protested, among other things, that the enemy should not enter the fortress as long as breath remained in his body: to which Kossuth answered in brief but pithy words; and, in token of his satisfaction, addressed Majthényi as "General," thereby raising him to that dignified rank.

After having been received with military honours by the troops stationed at the river-

side, Kossuth addressed each separate battalion. And although the circumstances were common to all, so that no great diversification was possible, yet the incomparable orator varied his observations to each by a wonderful multiplicity of ideas. Enchanted by the lively magic of his words, and carried away by the irresistible power of his popular eloquence, the enthusiastic soldiers clashed their arms, raised their weapons on high, and from the thick ranks a mighty shout, *Követjük!* "We follow you!" arose, like the rolling thunder which has been preceded by a flash of heaven's lightning.

When the reception was over, Kossuth went to the inner fortress, and that very night pointed out the volunteers who were to go with him. He also made arrangements for a general levy of all the fighting men (*Landsturm**), who were to follow him as soon as possible. At the same time, in consideration of the services rendered by Lieutenant Mayÿ, in drilling the town volunteers in artillery practice, he promoted the latter to the rank of Captain.

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* Literally, "Land-storm."

At noon next day, Kossuth left Komárom taking with him troops, seven thousand strong, and twenty-four cannons, for the relief of the army from Vienna. The blessing of thousands followed a man, to whose hands the fate of the country had been willingly committed.

A few days afterwards the landsturm of the Komárom county, which had been collected in all haste—which had been not at all, or very little organised, and was armed with merely scythes and pikes, began to march. That such a host, however well-disposed, could not answer to the expectations which might have been formed from a consideration of their numbers, is too evident to need any further explanation of their disorderly flight from the field at Schwechat. It is only another proof that irregular and unarmed masses are quite useless for a campaign, or even for a single pitched battle.

The unfortunate issue of the battle of Schwechat (30th October) did not discourage a nation conscious of its own good right, and of its unbroken strength. Every one perceived the cause of this failure, and in

accounting for it, immediately recognised the possibility of a better result, as soon as the past mistake should be corrected. The neighbourhood of Komárom, however, was filled with dismay, because the loss of the battle was laid to the charge of the troops which had been furnished by that county: and great bitterness of feeling was manifested towards the men, who, in the face of the whole country, had so shamefully compromised the honour of themselves and their fellow-citizens.

But while those who had fled were attacked with scornful and satirical reproaches, the people were eager, upon the other hand, to express their open admiration of those who had behaved well upon the field. They gave a hearty welcome to the volunteers who had served under Captain Sigmund Thalÿ, in Count Esterházÿ's battalion, and congratulated them upon their safe return home, after a short but honourable period of action.

About this time, Kossuth came to Komárom, on his way from Posony (Presburg) to Pesth. He was accompanied by the famous Polish General Bem, and they both took measures

for the defence and fortification of the fortress.

From this period to the time when the Austrians advanced, nothing of any great historical importance is to be mentioned respecting Komárom. During that interval the writer joined Perczel's staff, and remained in service under that general, until the battle of Moor, which took place on the 30th of December.

In spite of several wounds and bruises received from the Austrian cuirassiers, and when suffering from excessive hunger, I was able, by the assistance of two Honvéds (who likewise were wounded, but whom I have to thank for the preservation of my life), to escape from the hard-fought field by night; and on the 3rd of January I reached home.

The kind attentions of my family soon healed my wounds, and in three days after my return, I felt myself strong enough for duty. My next scene of action was Komárom. I was enabled to elude the observation of the enemy's outposts, and upon the 5th of January, I found myself again in the fortress, which I had left about two months

before. Though still suffering, I presented myself to Colonel Kosztolányi, and requested him to employ me in the fortress, so soon as I should be completely restored.

Before I proceed in my narrative, and describe the events which took place after my return, I must look back for a few days, and detail some important changes which had taken place in the situation of affairs at Komárom.

While Görgey retired towards Bicske, after the unfortunate affair at Bábolna, General Lázár—the same who, a fortnight afterwards, at Waizen, thought proper to desert the army—returned from Komárom to Almás, and then to the capital, leaving the following troops for the defence of the fortress, under the command of General Majthényi:—

INFANTRY.

Battalions.		Men.
1	Alexander regiment - - -	1,000
1	Honvéd, including two companies of the "Prince of Prussia" regiment (Commander Zichy) - - - -	1,000
1	Honvéd (Commander Horváth) - -	800
1	„ (Commander Greskovitz) -	1,000
1	„ (Commander Straube) - -	800

Battalions.			Men.
1	Honvéd	(Commander Geyza Kun) -	800
1	„	(Commander Majthényi) -	1,200
1	„	(Commander Balogh, formerly named Guyon) - - -	800
1	„	(Commander Esterházy) - -	800
1	„	(Commander Rutkay) - -	1,000
10 battalions			9,200

CAVALRY.

1 squadron Hussars of the Hunyadi regiment		150

ARTILLERY.

1 battalion of Honvéd artillery - -		1,000
1 division of the Imperial artillery, employed in making cartridges - - -		300
Or 10 battalions of Infantry, 1 squadron of Cavalry, 1 battalion and 2 companies of Artillery, altogether - - -		10,650

Besides there were three foot batteries, one of six-pounders and two of three-pounders, and also one six-pounder horse battery; each had eight pieces, including two howitzers: altogether thirty-two mounted field pieces, not reckoning the guns of the fortress.

The troops of the garrison were commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Kosztolányi, and, as brigadiers under him, by Majors Count Paul Esterházy, Guerlande, Janik, and Count Otto Zichy.

The director of the fortifications was Colonel Török, and the commander of artillery was Captain Kotni, of the Austrian artillery.

In vain had General Majthényi done all in his power to persuade General Lázár to leave a more numerous garrison in the fortress; the latter, alleging certain instructions given to him by the superior, General Görgey, peremptorily refused.

Serious disadvantages could not but follow from so great a disproportion between the number of troops and the extent of the fortress. We shall afterwards have occasion to observe, that our want of cavalry not only prevented any offensive operations on our own part, but also hindered us from pursuing the enemy, and taking advantage of their repulse, as we might have done after more than one of their Quixotic attacks. We shall further see that to our want of infantry must chiefly be ascribed the loss of the works lying upon the right bank of the Danube, and the consequent destructive bombardment of the town.

Görgey, indeed, might say in his justification, and it would be rather difficult to gainsay his

argument, that after leaving behind the garrison above mentioned, he himself had no more than eighteen thousand men with him; but be that as it may, there can be no doubt that the fortress of Komárom was exposed to very great danger, by being left with so feeble a garrison to hold it.

Under circumstances of this nature, nothing remained but to make the wisest use of the existing force, and to discover in the prominent talents of *one* extraordinary man a substitute for *thousands;* to find, in short, a man who was a host in himself. The keen eye of Kossuth fell upon Mack, a major in the Honvéd artillery.

The reader will allow us to give some detailed information about this remarkable man, whose praise was at first in every mouth, but who afterwards was as unanimously condemned, and is even yet, as we think, very much misunderstood.

After finishing his studies in a satisfactory manner, Joseph Mack, followed the long-cherished bent of his inclination, and chose the profession of arms. At first he was a hussar, but his soul thirsted for more

intellectual occupation, and he changed the sword for the cannon. He was transferred to the fifth artillery regiment, and was shortly afterwards received into the Austrian Bombardier Corps, wherein he passed the five years' course with distinction.

The revolution found Mack as artilleryman and teacher of military engineering in Pesth. The servile Austrian system had not been able to choke Hungarian patriotism in the stiff uniform of office: love of country, together with a reckless enterprising spirit, and thirst for distinction, determined the Imperial artilleryman to devote himself body and soul to the national cause. The question with him was, how he might best serve his fatherland, and most speedily attain the object of his desires. The idea of an independent national artillery corps arose in his mind, and so carried along this enthusiastic and passionate young man, that he gave himself no rest until he had realised his conceptions. At first he set to work indirectly upon the government, by means of the public press, and partly by agitation in the Radical Club, until at length he took direct measures to

press the urgent importance of his plan upon the attention of those in power. The threatening danger of an invasion from Croatia decided the ministry, after much hesitation, to grant Mack's request. And now at length the Austrian government seemed to see for the first time what a valuable servant the Imperial party was about to lose, and what an energetic man Hungary was likely to gain. In order to hinder him from formally going over, the Austrian War Minister promoted Mack suddenly, and out of his turn, to the rank of officer. But he refused the appointment, and in the capacity of a Honvéd Lieutenant, undertook to organise a division of artillerymen for the service of the Hungarian government.

Assisted by his friends, Lukács and Psotta, he had in a few weeks not only levied the requisite number of men, but also so far instructed them in their duties, that when they came out to shew their skill upon the Rákos field,* they excited general admiration, and reflected great credit upon their instructor.

Now, the Honvéd artillery was quartered

* A large field near Pesth, upon which in old times the election of the Hungarian kings took place.

in one and the same building, (the Joseph barracks at Pesth), with the Austrian artillery and a battalion of the Turszky regiment, th superior and inferior officers of which were out-and-out imperialists, while the men themselves were thought to be similarly disposed. It was arranged that a quarrel, artfully got up between the Hungarian and Austrian corps, should serve as an excuse for disarming the former.

Luckily Mack discovered the snare in time, ordered the wing of the building occupied by his division to be closed and made fast, hurried to the War Minister to obtain the dismissal of the Turszky infantry, came back to the barracks with the order in his hand, and at the same hour of night saw the battalion march out.

The General in command, furious at the failure of his plans, next day ordered three still more hostile battalions to be quartered in the Joseph barracks. Mack immediately went to the War Minister, but on his way he met Major Iványka and learned that the latter had concentrated from 8000 to 10,000 volunteers under his command at Vacz (Waizen) twenty

miles above Pesth, in order to lead them against the revolting Servians. At a glance, the bold Mack saw what was to be done, and asked Iványka to accompany him to the War Minister. Thus he gained two ends; first a written order to the General in command that the barracks must be vacated, and secondly, an order by word of mouth to Iványka, bidding him march with his volunteers directly into Pesth. Thus both orders were given as Mack desired; for the minister thought, with good reason, that the second order was necessary to sanction and account for the first.

In order to avoid a violent collision with the Austrian infantry, Mack was obliged to have recourse to stratagem. He managed to get the keys of the gates into his hands, and to have the entrance guarded by his own artillery. About ten o'clock in the evening, Iványka arrived at Pesth by railway marched to the barracks and drew up his troops in the spacious court-yard. There was now no more thought of opposition to the ministerial order, and the Austrians were removed not only out of the barracks, but

from the capital itself. The national artillery was rescued.

The shrewd and active artillery officer made assurance doubly sure, by obtaining (12th and 13th September), full power to take possession of all the small arms which were in the hands of the Austrian artillery.

While, however, this extraordinary man displayed such spirit and energy in providing for the safety of his cannoniers, a new and perhaps greater danger appeared in another quarter, threatening the safety of the seat of government itself.

The governor of the fortress Ofen,* in obedience to instructions received from Vienna, had collectcd several Austrian battalions together in the neighbourhood, and intended when they had marched into the place, to shut the gates, to impose obedience upon the national government, and even to drive them away from their legal residence, by threatening to bombard the city of Pesth.

* Called *Buda* in the Hungarian language : of course the fortress commands Pesth, which lies on the opposite side of the river.

On the evening of the 14th September, Louis Batthyány came suddenly to Mack's quarters, and informed him of the impending danger. In answer, Mack had an alarm sounded, addressed a few words to his brave troops, and taking a couple of cannon, marched straight to the fortress.

The sentinels at the gate took Mack's cannoneers for Austrian artillery, and allowed them to pass unchallenged, whereupon Mack surrounded the governor's house with his troops, planted his cannon, and showed a written order for the surrender of the fortress. The General was instantly obliged to yield and comply with the necessities of the case.

When the Austrians had been removed to make room for Hungarians, and the guns which were directed against Pesth had been withdrawn, Mack quartered his artillerymen with the grenadiers who had formerly constituted the garrison of Buda; they were born Hungarians, but still serving under Austrian colours. And when at dawn of day he came into the barracks, he found both Honvéds and Grenadiers dancing and singing in fraternal harmony, "To the health of our Fatherland's

defenders!" cried he, as he entered, taking up a charged glass. "To all our good healths then," replied the grenadiers impetuously. "Fatherland for ever!" "Hurrah for Kossuth!" "Long live Mack!" etc. In short the grenadiers ceased from that moment to be Imperial soldiers; the black-yellow facings were torn from their uniforms, and on that selfsame day the Austrian grenadier battalion became a Honvéd battalion.

History will one day dwell with pleasure upon the fact, that during the grand battle for Hungary's right, freedom and independence, not a single regiment or battalion, no, not a single company of real Hungarians bore arms against their country; and posterity will hear with wondering admiration, that upon hearing of the danger which threatened their country at home, all the hussar regiments lying in the Austrian provinces, whether in Galizia, Bohemia, or even from Salzburg, cut their way with lion's courage through the opposing Austrian troops, and came to defend their native hearths and homes.

When the people of Pesth, who the night before had been tormented with uncertainty,

awoke the next morning, they found that the bristling cannon, which had been directed against them, was no more to be seen, and that the fortress of Buda, as well as Pesth and the residence of the national government, were rescued.

In the meantime Jellachich invaded Hungary, and approached the capital at the head of 40,000 men, Croats and Austrians. "I am the father of my children!" cried Mack with enthusiasm; "let me now be their godfather!" At Pákozd, on the 29th September, Mack gave his children the baptism of blood: and if water-baptism can allay the evil spirit, blood-baptism can also rescue from the yoke of slavery.

The victory on that important day was decided by the artillery. General Moga, who commanded the Hungarian army, rode up to the thinned ranks of the cannoneers, and said in a kindly tone, turning towards Mack—"Permit me, Commander, in token of my satisfaction, to inspect your brave troops," and then, upon the battle-field, he gave to the hero of the day the title of Captain.

In this capacity he served under Perczel,

and took part in disarming the troops * which had been led by Roth and Philippovich: he then joined the army of the Danube, and before the battle at Schwechat, was detached to serve under Guyon against Simunich. In Tyrnau, a small troop, with Guyon, Mack, and Alexander Kossuth at the head, defended itself with the greatest determination against a more than five-fold force, until being cut down from thousands to hundreds, it was obliged to leave the field covered over with the slain.

After this, Mack returned to Pesth, where he had organised three well-dressed batteries. Amid these active exertions, he was summoned by the Government to command the artillery in Komárom. And in consideration of his approved patriotism, his tried ability, and his courage, which ever rose with the danger, the Committee of Defence thought proper to entrust Mack with such full power, that he was to be independent in his own sphere, and responsible to the Government alone.

Komárom must be defended at all costs, and to the last man, so said the order of

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* The reserved corps of Jellachich.

the Government. "Hold it as long as you can," was the laconic commentary of Görgey.

Early in the month of January, 1849, the new commander of artillery entered Komárom by the left bank of the river, after skilfully eluding the enemy's outposts. Placards announced his arrival; and so great was his reputation, that his very name was enough to inspire the faint-hearted with courage.

Meanwhile, however, the affairs of Komárom had assumed a new phase, as we shall show in the next section.

SECTION II.

From the First Siege to the Relief of the Fortress—that is, from 1st January to April, 1849.

In order to understand the operations which are now to be described, an accurate knowledge of the place itself is requisite.

General Klapka, in his * "National War in Hungary and Transylvania," has given such a correct description of the fortress, that we cannot do better than quote his words:—

"Situate at the eastern point of the Great Schutt, and lying upon each bank of the Danube, Comorn commands that river completely, and enables the possessor to transfer his operations from one bank to the other at his pleasure. The fortifications are of great extent, and exhibit great variety of arrangement. The *old fortress*, which lies on the extreme point of the island, forms the centre,

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* Der Nationalkrieg in Ungarn und Siebenbürgen in den Jahren, 1848 und 1849. Von Georg Klapka. Leipzig, 1851.

while the walls of the new fortress, extending in the direction of the Schutt, afford protection on the land side. In the old fortress are the depôts, the bakehouses, and the weapon manufactories, with stores of gunpowder and ammunition. The new fortress contains quarters for the governor and officers, with some barracks which are bomb-proof.

"*Têtes-de-pont* have been constructed on either side opposite to the old fortress. The one upon the left bank of the Waag (called, in German, the *Waagbrückenkopf*, or 'Waag Bridge-head,' *Tête-de-pont du Waag*) consists of a series of redoubts, communicating with one another, and beginning several hundred yards above the confluence of the Waag with the Danube: these redoubts then extend in a semicircle as far as the main stream of the Danube, opposite to O'-szöny. The *tête-de-pont* upon the right bank of the Danube is between O'-szöny and Uj-szöny: it is of the same construction with the former; but its fortifications are in better condition.

"Immediately in front of the latter bridge is a casemated star-fort, with which the redoubts are connected on the right hand and

on the left. In the spring of 1849, the Austrian besieging-army directed its chief attack upon this point.

"Latterly, the Austrian government had determined to build considerable outworks, and so raise the fortress to a place of the first rank. About two thousand yards westward of the fortress, lines were laid down, right across the island of Csallóköz (Schutt), to connect the Danube with the Waag. Five of the works were already finished, and were called, in honour of the late prince palatine, the Palatinal Line; though during our war they received the name of the Kossuth Line. From this point begins the rich but marshy plain of the Great Csallóköz (Schutt), which is often liable to be overflowed by water from the rivers. In order to put this line in a state of complete defence, it was necessary, during the siege, to fill up the unfinished parts with earth-works, particularly at the points of junction with the Waag and the Danube.

"The town of Comorn lies between the glacis of the fortress and the Palatinal Line: it formerly contained two thousand houses, with twenty thousand inhabitants. Opposite

to the town, and on the right of the *tête-de-pont* upon the Danube, is the village of Uj-szöny, between which and the town there is an island about two thousand paces long, called the Island of the Danube. The greater part of the town, as well as the outworks on the south, were commanded by a low range of hills beginning above Uj-szöny, the highest point of which, called the Monostor, lies close upon the bank of the river. Here an enemy could advance under cover, plant his first batteries against the town and the fortress, and harass the passages over the Danube. To prevent such a possibility, the Hungarian government resolved, even so early as the spring of 1848, to fortify these important heights, and to establish an entrenched camp upon them. These projected works were carried on by Lieutenant-Colonel Török, but he was not able to complete them; and when, in December, Görgey retired to Pesth, and left the fortress with its enfeebled garrison, these fortifications were suspended, because it was considered that a sufficient number of men could not be spared to go on with them."

We have seen, in the first section, what the

force of the garrison really was. We may further observe, that the fortress had two hundred and sixty pieces of heavy calibre, of which about the half stood upon the ramparts, while the rest were without carriages. There was a sufficient supply of provisions and ammunition for several months.

The smallest reflection will show, that there was a considerable disproportion between the disposable force of the garrison, and the extent of the fortifications: the works at Komárom were calculated for eighteen to twenty thousand men; whereas the troops present did not reach to half that number.

It will also be proved, in the sequel, that if this disproportion was not productive of any great danger to the fortress, it was only because the force of the besiegers was likewise out of proportion to the extent and strength of the place.

Soon after the departure of Görgey's rear-guard, about 30th December, 1848, the second Austrian army-corps came up before Komárom, marched just beyond reach of our guns, and summoned the garrison to surrender unconditionally. The governor returned a

negative answer, and added, that he would hold the fortress for his constitutional king, Ferdinand V. Upon this the Austrians retired, and left two brigades upon the right bank, though only one upon the island of Csallóköz (Schutt), to invest the place.

A work published upon the winter campaign, by the *chef d'état-major* under Windischgrätz, contains the following statements respecting the troops employed to invest the fortress:—

"Lieutenant Fieldmarshal Ramberg, with Lederer's brigade, with the Fiquelmont regiment of dragoons, with one twelve-pounder, one cavalry, and one reserve battery, altogether three battalions, five squadrons, and eighteen field-pieces, received orders to remain and invest the *tête-de-pont* before Komárom, and to effect a junction as soon as possible with General Neustädter, who was posted upon the left bank of the Danube for a similar purpose. Besides this, a company of sappers and miners was placed at his disposal. The Neustädter brigade numbered as follows:—

1 Battalion of Ottachaners } frontier
1 „ of Oguliners and Suliners } troops.
1 „ from the Banat, a Croatian regiment.
1 „ of the Archduke Louis regiment.
2 Squadrons of Francis Joseph dragoons.
1 six-pounder foot battery, with six pieces.

Total,—4 battalions, 2 squadrons, and 6 field-pieces: altogether, 7 battalions, 7 squadrons, and 24 field-pieces."

On the 11th January, General Ramberg drew his lines of circumvallation, which extended from O'-szöny over Mocsa in a semicircle to the Danube; for the garrison had not only abandoned the fortifications upon the sandhill (Monostor), but having left both O'-szöny and Uj-szöny, they had retired within the fortifications of the *tête-de-pont.* The island of Schutt was occupied by Neustädter's brigade, which maintained communication with Posony (Presburg), while upon the left bank the fortress remained free, for there was no enemy nearer than at Leopoldvár (Leopoldstadt).

From this it is clear, that the enemy's forces were hardly a match for ours, and certainly were not superior; hence they could be broken through at every point of their besieging lines.

Only General Majthényi, and he alone, refused to acknowledge this possibility.

The continued retreat of the army, the evacuation of the capital, the removal of the seat of government to Debreczin, together with the feebleness of our own garrison, had such a depressing effect upon the fainthearted governor, that he, who erst had so loudly boasted of his heroic self-sacrifice for the country's good, sank down to heartless poltroonery, and scarcely knew what he was doing.

Thus he charged Major Paul Esterházy, who was in command of the Kossuth line, to give up that position in case of a hostile attack, and to retire within the inner fortress. But, fortunately, the major, who is both a distinguished patriot and a good soldier, was so far from obeying that order, that he encouraged his troops to steadfast resistance, and resolved to defend the lines to the very last man.

Such unworthy and cowardly behaviour on the part of the governor was calculated to beget a suspicion of treason, and many of his officers began to have doubts about his honour; but, in our opinion, the cause of his disgrace-

ful conduct was nothing else than want of decision, and of moral or even physical courage. However, Majthényi could no longer support his painful position. On the very day that Mack entered Komárom, the governor called a council of war; and after stating his opinion that the fortress could not be held for eight days longer, and that the government, by fleeing to Debreczin, or perhaps, for all he could tell, to Asia, had sacrificed the garrison, and left it to its fate, he laid down his command, at the same time giving up his rank as general

In vain both Mack and Esterházy used all their eloquence to turn the governor from his purpose: he persisted obstinately in his decision. This conduct roused a suspicion in Mack's mind also, that Majthényi was harbouring some traitorous design; and therefore, first of all, he demanded the key of the powder-magazine; and no sooner had he received it, than he threatened the late governor with instant death, in case the enemy should, on that night, make an attack upon the fortress. Majthényi repudiated the suspicion that he had any understanding with the Austrians,

and we ourselves believe that he was not capable of such a crime.

After the resignation of the governor, the council of war felt itself called upon to fill up his vacant post provisionally; and it was offered to Colonel Ignatius Török, director of the fortifications, as being the senior officer. For a long time he declined an honour so serious, and so laden with responsibility; but at length, encouraged by the promises of his brother officers, that they would assist him with their most devoted co-operation, he undertook the temporary command, until a governor should be definitively appointed by the administration. From the same council of war a report was sent to the government concerning these important changes, and Captain Stephen Komáromy set off with the dispatches to Debreczin.

The council of war, which now met every day, arrived at the conviction, that the enemy, so far from meditating an attack, was only too glad to be left undisturbed. For the Austrians, not being superior in numbers to the troops of the garrison, were not able to keep close guard upon their besieging lines, and

hence at no point were safe from being broken through. Consequently, the council did not hesitate to profit by the weakness of the enemy; and as the possession of those places in the Csallóköz which were nearest Komárom would be a great relief to the garrison, it was determined to attack Neustädter's brigade, about three thousand strong, which was lying in Vásárút and Nyarasd, with a view of driving those troops out of the island of Csallóköz altogether.

Between the evening of the 13th and the morning of the 14th January, Lieutenant-Colonel Guerlonde sallied from the fortress with three battalions, one squadron of Hunyadi hussars, and two batteries; and about noon came before Nyarasd, where the enemy, drawn up in order, was ready to receive him. After a smart cannonade of nearly an hour, Guerlonde detached his cavalry to take the Austrians in the rear, while the infantry was to storm them in front. A well-directed cannon-ball struck down Lieutenant-Colonel B. Geramb; the Austrians fell into disorder, and began their retreat from the town before our cavalry had time to get round. In this en-

gagement the enemy lost thirty-three men, dead or wounded, while our loss was only fifteen. The object of the enterprise was gained: the enemy's brigade fell back upon Presburg, and the island of Csallóköz was cleared.

This first success of their military operations, as well as the news from Debreczin, announcing the consolidation and activity of the government, raised the courage of the soldiers, and gave confidence to the townspeople. Still discontent was excited upon learning that Colonel Meszlényi was appointed governor of the fortress; and an assembly of staff-officers empowered Major Count Paul Esterházy to request from the former a voluntary resignation of that appointment. The colonel at once tendered his resignation to the council of war, from a feeling of duty to his country, because it was clearly proved to him that he was unequal to the arduous requirements of the office. However, to avoid similar mistakes for the future, the council thought it highly advisable to acquaint the government with the real state of affairs, and to explain the distracted state of the country: accord-

ingly, Captain Thaly, who was well acquainted with the circumstances of the case, was sent on a mission to Debreczin. Shortly afterwards, the government proved its better knowledge of the affair by nominating Colonel Török to the command of the fortress; and under his direction the necessary arrangements were made.

When Captain Thaly declined the offer of returning to Comorn as government commissioner, Nicolaus Puky, the representative of Heves county, was sent in that capacity. At the same time, Thaly brought back the nomination of Count Esterházy, Janik, and Mack to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonels; and as a token of the interest felt by the administration, 70,000 florins, C.M. (about £7,000), to form a division of hussars, which afterwards was incorporated with the 18th hussar regiment.

The good understanding which now generally prevailed, was disturbed only by a dispute arising between the government commissioner and Kosztolányi, commander of the troops, concerning the extent and application of the powers entrusted to the former. In

order to avoid further dissension, the council of war brought the case before the Committee of Defence, to which also the government commissioner had appealed, in a report which he made upon the fortress. The courier who was sent with these dispatches to Debreczin, carried with him likewise the documents relative to elections which had taken place in Ocsa and Udward, two divisions of the Komárom county. For it happened, that all the four representatives of the county had violated their duty, and abandoned their seats in parliament: not one of them had followed the government from Pesth to Debreczin. Indignant at this faithless conduct of their former representatives, the two divisions of the county which were not occupied by the enemy, without waiting for orders, elected other men in their stead: in the Udward district, Journalist Csernátoni; and in the Ocsa district, Captain Sigismund Thaly,—were chosen by acclamation. And although these elections, from not having been made in due form, were declared null and void in the Chamber of Representatives, yet they gave a speaking proof

of the lively interest which the people took in the affairs of the country.

On the 7th March, the third messenger came from the government, and brought the President's answer. The full powers of the commissioner were explained in a letter from Kossuth; namely, that they comprehended the supreme inspection of the defence of the fortress; and that, accordingly, the commissioner had a right, in case of misconduct, or even of well-grounded suspicion, to depose and send to Debreczin for examination, not only any one of the staff-officers, but also the governor himself.

Besides this, Kossuth's letter contained the welcome news that our armies were soon about to take an offensive position, and encouraged the garrison to steadfast resistance. I may be allowed to mention, that among the papers received, there was one granting me a major's commission.

In a council of war, at which the commissioner and the governor presided conjointly, the orders were read aloud, and of course accepted with dutiful obedience.

After the papers had been read, the council discussed the important question, whether a communication should be established with the right bank of the Danube. It was decided that a bridge of boats should be built between the *tête-de-pont* and the inner fortress: the work was to be undertaken and carried on by a commission, composed of officers and of certain citizens deputed by the town authorities, —all under the direction of Mack, the artillery commander.

Properly speaking, the cost of making that bridge devolved upon the corporation of the town, because of the tolls which would be hereafter derived from it.

But in the latter part of the previous December, in order to keep open a communication with the right bank for the passage of Görgey's troops, Commissioner Halasy, who then acted for the government, refused (in spite of all representations to the contrary made by the town authorities) to take away the bridge in time; so that it was partly broken and destroyed by the ice which drove down the river: hence the state was bound to bear the expense of making a new one, and

the timber-merchants of Komárom received orders to collect materials for the structure.

The work went on slowly, and at the approach of the enemy had to be suspended. However, this point at least was gained, that the necessary materials were in readiness.

When, by foul treason, the fortress of Leopoldvár had fallen into the enemy's hands, Lieutenant Fieldmarshal Simunich advanced from the Waag to Komárom, and drove the division under Lieutenant-Colonel Otto Zichy out of the Csallóköz. Reinforced by these fresh troops, the besiegers numbered four brigades, fourteen thousand strong; namely,—

INFANTRY.

3rd batt. of the		Welden Hochenegg reg.		1 batt.
3rd	„	Hess	„	1 „
1st	„	Archduke Louis	„	1 „
1st	„	Khevenhüller	„	$\frac{2}{6}$ „
2nd	„	ditto	„	1 „
1st	„	Prince Constantine	„	1 „
1st	„	Emperor's	„	1 „
1st	„	Wilhelm	„	1 „
2nd	„	Ceccopieri	„	1 „
1st	„	Hartmann	„	1 „
3rd	„	Haynau	„	1 „
4th	„	Sluiner	„	1 „
12th	„	Chasseurs	„	$\frac{2}{6}$ „

1st batt. of the Count Nugent	reg.	1 batt.
3rd „	Archduke Louis	„ 1 „

CAVALRY.

6 squadrons of Fiquelmont	dragoons	6 squad.
2 „	Archduke Karl light horse	2 „

Total, $13\frac{2}{3}$ battalions, and 8 squadrons.

Altogether,—

Infantry	11,256 men.
Cavalry	1,121 „
Engineers and artillery	1,756 „
	14,133 men.

The command of these forces was taken by Lieutenant Fieldmarshal Simunich, who soon began to display great activity: for up to the 9th of March, he invested the fortress on all sides much more closely than before; and then, having discovered our intentions of making a communication with the right bank, he determined to occupy the hill Monostor, which is situated on that bank, and which had recently been fortified by redoubts.

His columns advanced to the charge covered by their artillery; but they were received with a murderous cannonade, which Mack directed against them from the inner fortress, from the

left wing of the Kossuth line, and from the island of the Danube: the first guns which were discharged were pointed by Mack himself. We have previously noticed the talent possessed by that remarkable man, and the courage with which he could inspire his troops. At this moment, as he rode round to encourage his recruits, and to watch the movements of the enemy, he observed that one of the Austrian guns was pointed in his direction. "See," cried the former artillery-man, with a smile, "that shot is aimed at me." Scarcely had he spoken the words, when a rocket flew hissing over his head, singed the feathers of his cap, and fell behind his horse. "Now show the old Austrian pedants," said he cheerily to the young men at the guns, "what good lessons you have learnt in a few months. Fire!"—and one of the enemy's cannon fell dismounted to the ground.

For three successive days and nights the artillery went on thundering uninterruptedly; but on the fourth day Mack suddenly ceased firing from many points, and drew back his cannon, before any one could tell what had moved him to this unaccountable procedure.

When afterwards brought before a court-martial for this and other faults, he laid all the blame upon the council of war, for not allowing him, in the first instance, to occupy those important heights before the enemy came up, and then refusing him permission to storm them immediately after they had been seized.

After the capitulation of the fortress he gave another, and as he thought a decisive, reason. For among his particular friends he justified himself by saying, that as there were so few balls and bomb-shells in the fortress, he thought it better to spare them for a future occasion; and that he had, in fact, ordered his men to gather up the balls shot by the enemy; offering, at the same time, a premium upon every ball that was found.

We think that these reasons will hardly stand the test, especially as the position was of such immense importance, not merely to the fortress, but more especially to the town, which shortly after was bombarded from this very Monostor hill, and was subjected to such a hailstorm of projectiles, that it was a second time almost reduced to ashes.

Before we say any more about the loss of this invaluable outwork, and the consequences of that loss, we think proper to state what had been done, meanwhile, in the way of fortification.

It has been observed that Sigismund Thaly, formerly captain in the engineer corps, was promoted to the rank of major in the same department. He had practised for several years as a civil engineer, but had not been educated in any military institution.

General Török, who cherished some inveterate military prejudices, and who was influenced by the sarcasms launched by an otherwise radical newspaper, called the *Martius tizenötödike*,* against the *Táblábiros*,† who were invested with the higher military dignities, thought that Major Thaly could not possibly possess the knowledge requisite for his station.

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* That is, "March 15th," in remembrance of the revolution which broke out in Pesth on that day.

† A title of honour applied to those persons in each county who were distinguished by their position or their education: it involved a certain degree of influence in the judicial and political affairs of the country. *Tábla* means "table," and *biro* means "judge;" therefore, *Táblábiro* corresponds to our phrase, "member of the board."

As if private industry could not get up the special information necessary for a military engineer; or as if officers who had been brought up from their boyhood in military academies, could not turn out incapable persons.

Suffice it to say, that the former Austrian engineer, now General Török, stuck to his text; and though, perhaps, he regarded the radical journal in all other respects as an organ of the devil, nevertheless he took for gospel its declamations against the *Táblábiros*.

A member of the council of war, to whom he confessed his dissatisfaction,—remarking, at the same time, that Thaly's commission could not be simply set aside,—advised the governor to go to work indirectly. "Set the new-made engineer-major," said he, "upon some difficult task, such as he will not be likely to perform; and then his incapacity being proved, he will be cashiered as a matter of course." The general followed his advice, and ordered the major to fortify the island of the Danube.

Before the end of a week, Thaly had prepared his plan for approval, having first

examined the sketches proposed on a former occasion by Captain May. According to the plan which he proposed, breastworks should be erected along the bank to cover the infantry; but upon the higher points of the island, batteries should be erected for heavy cannon, and for a couple of mortars. The exact position of the two mortars, however, was necessarily to depend upon the future position of the enemy's artillery.

A covered way, practicable both for infantry and cavalry, completed the proposed design. As Lieutenant-Colonel Mack had also prepared a plan, the governor named an examining commission, consisting of Mack, Thaly, and Captain May, and he himself presided over the inquiry.

Mack contented himself with three heavy batteries, the first of which was to be erected upon the counter-guard of the inner fortress, the second upon the Kossuth line at its junction with the Danube, and the third upon an artificial height to be raised in the middle of the island itself. When this was done, the fruit-trees, which stood in the way, were to be cut down, and the island was to be defended by the combined fire of the three batteries.

To this Thaly objected, that if the infantry, instead of guarding the bank, should confine themselves merely to the battery in the middle of the island, the enemy might take advantage of a dark night to cross the river in boats, and to make themselves masters of it; this decided the question in favour of his own plan, and he was charged to carry it into execution. From this day forward, Török condemned all doctrines advocated by the *Martius* newspaper without exception, and respected the "civil engineer," as if he had always worn a uniform.

And now it only remained to put the plan into operation with all possible speed. The garrison was occupied upon a service which allowed of but little repose, and therefore could not spare the necessary hands; consequently, help had to be sought elsewhere. There was no doubt that the civil authorities of the town would do their duty in this instance; but we made no application to them, because we did not wish to obtain an order where a simple appeal would be sufficient. A public meeting was held upon the Rosalien-square, and Mack and Thaly called upon the people to assist their brethren in the work.

And just as in the preceding autumn, when the Croats were advancing under Jellachich, the inhabitants of Buda-Pesth, men and women, rich and poor, yea, even the very children, toiled willingly and laboriously at the fortifications of Buda (Ofen); so, upon the present occasion, gentlemen who had never handled anything heavier than a pen, came forward, and seizing the pickaxe, toiled side by side with the meanest of their fellow-citizens; ladies who, in their own houses, had never soiled their fair fingers with any household work, and who perhaps the day before had been employed in netting or embroidery, now laid their hands to the wheelbarrow, and carried earth to their husbands, who were engaged in making embankments. A noble example of true citizenship, and a worthy imitation of that devotedness which has made Saragossa the admiration of posterity!

By aid of these thousands of excellent citizens, the earthworks were soon raised up to such a height, that when the enemy came and planted his batteries against them, he could make no impression, and his horizontal shots had no effect. The people of Komárom

deserve the praise of having first given their fortress to the nation, and then of having essentially contributed to its defence.

As before observed, we had no corps of engineers, for twenty sappers and miners who were present are scarcely worth naming; consequently, the supply of this want became a prime consideration with those who had the management of the fortifications. All good workmen, such as carpenters, masons, joiners, etc., who happened to be found in the battalions, were picked out and formed into a company of pioneers. A few weeks afterwards, when I was appointed the Director of the fortifications, a second company was formed. Thanks to the intelligence and activity of their captain, Joseph Baranyay, this division was shortly able to superintend the civil workmen; and soon afterwards, when the enemy no longer fired upon our people with balls, but rained a storm of bombshells and grenades, so that I really believed we should have to suspend operations and call the people from work, the pioneers alone went on with the fortification, and finished it in spite of a continued and murderous fire.

Let us return to the taking of the Monostor. Scarcely had the Austrians established themselves upon this commanding eminence, when they attacked the above-mentioned works with rockets, and at the same time endeavoured with their twenty-four pounders to hinder the completion of the bridge. Their attempts upon the works, indeed, were fruitless: but upon the first day that they opened fire, they succeeded in sinking several of the boats, upon which the bridge rested. This disaster at length determined the commander of the fortress to regain the hill which we had lost.

On the evening of the 14th March, several battalions, and a few batteries were sent across the river in boats, and posted at the *tête-de-pont* (the so-called "star-fort", or "star-redoubt") which is on the right bank. The expedition was led by Lieut.-Colonel Guerlonde. At seven o'clock next morning the attack began. The brave Major Geyza Kún stood with his battalion under a heavy cannonade for more than an hour, before our battery could be planted in a favourable position. Meanwhile, the enemy had

been able to set on fire the village of Uj-Szöny, which lay in the rear of our men.

Guerlonde now became anxious about the line of retreat, which necessarily passed through the village which was in flames, and so he retired at once, though only just in time to pass unscathed through the streets of burning houses.

If the delay of the officer, who had the command of the battery, was the immediate cause of failure, still a part of the responsibility must fall upon Guerlonde himself; for he should not have made an attack before the artillery came up; and then, instead of letting Kún's battalion stand exposed to the enemy's fire, he should have marched on to the charge with fixed bayonets. The enemy was inferior in point of numbers, and most probably would have been obliged to give ground, for, some weeks afterwards, the same Major Kún stormed these very redoubts, marching up hill from the Danube side, and under much more difficult circumstances.

However well-intentioned, General Török had not strength of mind enough to conduct the defence with energy, nay, he had hardly

sufficient force of character to maintain proper discipline within the walls of the fortress. We will, by the reader's permission, take a hasty view of the daily life led by the garrison, and then go on uninterruptedly with our account of the siege.

The manifesto of the emperor published upon the 4th of March, wherein he did not blush to trample under foot the old Hungarian Constitution which had braved a thousand years, caused the bitterest feelings of resentment in the garrison, and throughout the whole land. Yet it was generally known that there was in the House of Representatives a party which placed itself in opposition to the unanimous will of the nation, and meditated a reconciliation with the arch-enemy of Hungary. Now, at the news of the glorious victories won at Bicske and Izsaszeg, a captain took the initiative, and entered his protest against all party attempts to bring about a pacification; for he maintained that the army alone ought to decide the question of war, or peace. When Mack was informed of this protest being published, he forbade its circulation, and went so far as to put the author

in prison. As the circular recommended a sort of Praetorian despotism, it may have been right enough to hinder the spread of such doctrines; but the imprisonment of the author produced discontent, for there could not be the slightest doubt of his patriotic intentions. There was a general demand for that officer's release, and Sigismund Thaly discussed the subject in the *Komáromi Ertesitó* (or "Comorn Moniteur," a Government newspaper) arguing in favour of the prisoner; the more so, as the motives for his confinement did not seem clear from suspicion of private revenge, and the works connected with the fortification urgently required his presence. At length the Government Commissioner interfered, and set that able officer at liberty.

A second incident showed still more painfully the want of a definitive and energetic commander-in-chief The prosperous turn which Hungarian affairs were taking, excited in the breast of Majthényi, the former governor, a desire to resume command of the fortress, and it was reported that he was only waiting for the occasion upon which the colours of his cousin's battalion, the 36th,

together with those of two others, should be consecrated. The two other battalions stood drawn up within the fortress, and they were only waiting for the 36th, which, at that time, was posted on the Kossuth line, when all at once the former governor appeared in general's uniform, accompanied by his adjutants, and advanced directly to the assembled corps of officers.

At the advice of Mack and others, General Török stepped forward and asked the newcomer, what he meant by appearing in general's uniform. "Because I am still a general, and governor of the fortress," was the haughty reply; and at the same time he produced the decree which appointed him to the office, and which had not been taken from him upon his resignation: he added, also, that the man who undertook to question him could show no similar authority from the Government. This audacious behaviour caused universal indignation. "Once and for all, Sir Ex-General, we call upon you to take yourself off," cried Mack, with a stern voice, to the baron before him. The latter ordered Mack to be silent, and called him a scoundrel, whereupon the

other drew his sword, and demanded instant satisfaction. Then Mack's comrades, boiling with rage, surrounded the perpetrator of this shameless insult, tore off the ornaments from his uniform, and trampled them, together with his shako, under foot. To avoid further acts of violence, a patrol was called to conduct the bold intruder to his residence, whence (in accordance with an order from the Government, which at his own request had hitherto remained in abeyance), he was conveyed to Keszegfalva—a place in the neighbourhood where, some time after, he was made prisoner by the Austrians.

It was not until this unpleasant affair was over, that Major Majthényi arrived at the place appointed for the ceremony; Mack, in an address, explained the circumstances to him and his battalion. Tears started to the eyes of this worthy and brave old officer, when he heard of his cousin's disgrace. He thought, and so did his subalterns, that he must give in his resignation, until he received a satisfactory explanation of the dispute in which his cousin had been involved. But eventually their minds were set at rest, by the representa-

tions of friends, and particularly by articles which appeared in the Komárom newspaper, wherein, among others, Mack detailed the incidents of the quarrel, and exposed the ambiguous conduct of the former governor.

It was not without difficulty that we resolved to give this unhappy affair a place in our chronicle; but, as we had proposed to render a faithful account of all transactions which occurred, we could not pass over in silence even this unpleasant discussion. However, we may add, in honour of the Hungarian troops, that nothing of the kind happened again during the whole campaign.

Every day the Government Commissioner Puky was more and more convinced that the chief command was in feeble hands. The government, up to this time, would not, and perhaps could not, summon any general officer from the field to undertake the command of the fortress. Before this time, Puky had been empowered to appoint a committee of defence, by consent and in co-operation with General Török; and recent events now determined him to put his powers into exercise. He named Major Thaly, together with Captain Krivácÿ,

of the artillery, as members of this new committee, and requested the governor to appoint, within three days, other officers as members. Thus the committee was formed, and henceforth supplied the place of the council of war.

The members were as follows:—

1. General Ignatius Török, Governor, and Director of Fortifications.
2. Colonel Moritz Kostolányi, Commander of the troops.
3. Lieut.-Colonel Mack, Commander of the Artillery.
4. Lieut.-Colonel Janik.
5. Lieut.-Colonel Count Paul Esterházÿ.
6. Lieut.-Colonel Járosÿ.
7. Major Sigismuud Thaly.
8. Captain Krivácÿ (Artillery).

Afterwards, General Török nominated Major Brunsvik, of the Alexander Infantry, and Captain Turcsányi, of the Artillery.

The Government Commissioner claimed the right of being present at the sittings of the committee.

Besides the needful measures of defence,

which we shall soon have occasion to notice, the attention of the committee was soon directed to the abuses and want of order, which were seen in the Commissary department. The Intendant-General Szent-Györgyi, who had been in the Austrian service, stood charged with embezzlement to a serious amount, and was put upon his examination. The War Commissioner, who had also been left behind by the Austrians, was discharged at once. The conduct of the new authorities was justified by evident proofs of his insincere behaviour, and by the consideration that his office, which indeed had not been sanctioned by the Hungarian minister at war, was superfluous.

When Guerlonde had failed in his attempt to drive the enemy from the Monostor redoubts, the Austrians made all speed the very next night to throw up breastworks, under cover of which they began to erect their batteries. The cannonade which we opened upon them from the island of the Danube, and from the Kossuth line, was, of course, not effective enough to stop the progress of the enemy's operations. Bombs and grenades alone could be used with any hope of success. Hence, Major Thaly and

Captain Krivaczÿ represented to the commander of the artillery the necessity of using more efficient projectiles; to which he rejoined, that he had no mortars for a long range, and that the ordinary mortars would not reach the distance required. The result showed over and over again that this opinion was false. And as, after the capitulation, Mack excused himself for ceasing fire (upon an occasion above referred to), by saying that he wished to spare his cannon-balls for a period of greater danger, although he could not really prove that he had been in want of ammunition, so he endeavoured to defend this second piece of negligence on the same untenable grounds.

Upon the 19th of March, scarcely four days after they had commenced the work, the Austrians had completed their batteries. Hitherto, they had been able to annoy us only with rockets, and their fire was directed merely against our works upon the island of the Danube: but now their artillery could not only play, both day and night, upon that point, but could reach the town, and even the inner fortress itself.

On the 20th of March, at eight o'clock in the morning, the enemy opened his fire on the town, and the first bombshell fell in Raizen-street. The quarter in which that street lies had been almost entirely destroyed by the fire which took place in the previous autumn; and as at present there was only here and there a house which had since been restored, the projectiles could not do very much harm at that point. The inhabitants of the quarter fled, with their goods, to an opposite part of the town, where they met with hospitality from their less unfortunate brethren.

For full two days, the Austrian cannons thundered unceasingly against this deserted quarter; more than a thousand 18 and 24-pound balls, and above four hundred bomb-shells, came flying from the Monostor, and fell upon that small space of ground, without so much as setting a hut on fire. The failure of their attempts roused these far-famed artillerymen to new attempts. They were determined, at any price, to make the "rebels' nest" a prey to the flames; no matter even if their own comrades were involved in the common destruction; no matter if hospitals

or churches, buildings respected by the savages themselves, went to the ground; nothing was to be spared, if they could but extend the fire in all directions, and gratify the thirsty vengeance of Imperial hirelings.

In time of war, it is a custom acknowledged by all civilised people, and expressly enjoined in the Austrian army, to spare any building upon which a white flag is erected, because that mark denotes a house which is devoted to the sick or to the wounded—in fact, a hospital. As soon as the artillery began to fire, General Török ordered a white flag to be planted upon the military hospital; but so far from having the desired effect, it was made a target for the balls of our unnatural besiegers. It is to be observed, that the hospital contained not merely our own wounded, but those also of the Austrians who had been left behind, and of this fact their comrades outside must have been perfectly aware. Such unexampled and brutal conduct aroused even the Governor, who was as mild and quiet a man as ever lived; and he, who had been thirty years in the Austrian service, now cursed the barbarity of those whom he had been accustomed to look upon as

brethren.* We were obliged to take down the white flag.

The bombardment of the town continued till the 29th March. Day by day, and sometimes also during the night, the imperial generals reminded us of the paternal care felt by New-Austria's youthful monarch. The cannonade against the works upon the Island of the Danube, may be justified (quite independently of all political considerations about the justice of the war) upon military grounds, as a matter of necessity; but the devastation of the town was nothing more than an act of Vandal barbarity, which took its rise in low feelings of spiteful vengeance. Or did, perhaps, General Simunich expect to rouse the townspeople, and make them rise in mutiny against the garrison? His spies must have

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* A similar act of ferocity was committed by General Hentzi, the much praised defender of Buda; for he made no scruple to bombard the Karl-barracks in Pesth, which had been converted into a hospital, though he must have known that a part of the two thousand Austrians left by Windischgrätz lay there. They had been found by the Hungarians, when the latter entered Pesth, and were treated with the same attention as the wounded on our own side.

informed him, that, far from being moved to surrender by their bitter lot, the people of Komárom were stung with indignation, and were ready to offer up life and property, rather than again become subject to the faithless, perjured House of Hapsburg.

On the 29th March, a bombshell fell upon the Reformed Church, in Szombat Street, and set fire to its shingle roof. But soon help, from all sides, was at hand. Thanks to the encouraging example set by Commissioner Puky and Burgomaster Antman, the brave men, both civil and military, who came to aid, disregarded the heavy cannonading which followed, and succeeded in arresting the progress of the devouring element. Geyza Kún, ever foremost in the fight, was here also the first to climb up and mount the blazing roof. His battalion followed their courageous leader, and of the townspeople, citizens Mikus, Zabránsky, Rábsky, and Sigismund Katona, distinguished themselves by activity and presence of mind.

Meanwhile, a change had taken place in the command of the Austrian army. Lieutenant F. M. Welden was charged to take in hand

the demoralised troops of Windischgrätz, and lead them to deeds of glory. The result showed that he had undertaken a thankless work.

Before the new general had undertaken the immediate command of the imperial army, he thought that he would air his Italian laurels upon Hungarian fields, and open the game by an effective prelude. Despairing of being able to reduce the "rebel hordes" by regular proceedings, he thought he would attempt something extraordinary. For why should not a conqueror of Italy, emulate the fame of Ancient Rome, and take a fortress on his march, especially as the Roman glory was "to come, see, and conquer"?

Puky received news of the enemy's intentions on the 29th March. At the same time, information was brought that the Austrians had prepared everything at Almás, below Komárom, for a passage over to the left bank of the Danube. Of course, he immediately communicated this news to the governor of the fortress. On the same day, General Welden sent an inhabitant of Uj-Szöny with a proclamation to Komárom, wherein he summoned

both town and garrison, under promise of most gracious pardon from his Majesty, to surrender within twelve hours, threatening that, in case of refusal, he would put every soul within Komárom to the edge of the sword. This document was received rather with contempt than with indignation, and was returned to its author. "You shall pay for this, hardened rebels!" cried the executor of the Imperial pleasure, and on the 31st of March (All Fools' Eve), he crossed the Danube. At the head of four or five thousand men, and four squadrons of cavalry, he advanced, in broad daylight, about ten o'clock in the morning, from the right bank, for the Quixotic purpose of taking one of the strongest places in Europe by a *coup de main*.

While the enemy was drawing out his forces, Commissioner Puky gave orders to burn down Zichy's farm-house, which, lying on the bank of the Waag, would hinder the play of our cannon: the artillerymen ran to their guns, and the infantry posted on that side, took up their position behind the breastwork. Several batteries of great guns were served by a division of Komárom national

guards, who did their duty in a most satisfactory manner.

With sounds of drums and trumpets, the "supporters of the monarchy" advanced towards the stubborn "robbers' nest." Already in his mind the haughty general sees the black-yellow ensign floating upon the battlements, when, all at once, the well-pointed cannons turn his rosy illusions into blood-stained realities. The 24 and 18-pounders spread death and destruction along all the enemy's line, so that, within an hour and a half, the Austrian battalions were broken, and fled in wild disorder. About three hundred dead, or wounded, were left on the field, and paid the penalty due to the criminal vain glory of their leader. The enemy's rocket battery was shattered, and several cannons were dismounted: the only thing which saved their troops from being entirely cut off, was our want of cavalry. The second division of Welden's horse covered the retreat, when their infantry were flying in disorder, and prevented us from making a sally, since we had no more than a squadron of hussars at our disposal.

As a historian and a soldier, I cannot refrain from making honourable mention of the valour displayed by those Austrian chasseurs who marched forward, at a great sacrifice, against the Apalia island, which was not at that time entirely fortified. One company had already waded through an arm of the Waag, and almost occupied the island, when Böthy, Lieutenant of the 17th Honvéd battalion, perceiving the danger of that critical moment, charged the enemy with fixed bayonets. After a most obstinate resistance, the bold chasseurs were obliged to give way before the no less determined attack of the Honvéds. Unhappily, the young man, whose presence of mind and example had rescued the island, was struck by a bullet, and died in the moment of triumph. Besides the loss of this officer, the garrison had twenty-six men dead, or wounded.

Mack's conduct, during this engagement, involved consequences so important to himself, that we feel obliged to recount his behaviour circumstantially. When the artillery had commenced firing, the Government Commissioner remarked, that a certain battery

was provided with no more than seven balls. He therefore sent an artillery sergeant to Lieutenant Colonel Mack, requesting a further supply. But as the messenger did not bring a written order, Mack bluntly refused to pay any attention.

He gave a similar answer to a second messenger, who had been sent by Colonel Janik, to ask for ammunition for the infantry. This obstinate adherence to the letter of the regulations, during the time of actual conflict, when it is sometimes impossible to put down orders upon paper, caused mistrust to arise in the minds of many officers, and begot a general suspicion of Mack's honesty, so that afterwards this formed one of the charges against which he had to defend himself.

As, from a review of his subsequent conduct, we cannot dispute his integrity, we feel it a duty and a pleasure to state the reasons which he alleged in his justification:—"I did not feel myself bound," said he, "to obey the requisition of the Commissioner; because I was convinced that the ammunition, small as it might be, was sufficient for those batteries: and, moreover, the officer actually in command

did not ask for a supply. As to Colonel Janik," he added, "I could not send him any cartridges, because I was not in the inner fortress, but was standing at the advanced line of guns; nor ought I to have done so, because I saw that the fight was nearly over, and that Janik's infantry would have no occasion to fire another shot. And if," continued he, "I had been intriguing with the Austrians, I should not have exposed myself to the very hottest of the fire; I should not have pointed the cannons, as I did, against the enemy, and so have compelled them to fly in hasty confusion from the field."

Now that we can review the whole of Mack's career, we are inclined to admit his innocence, and to ascribe his behaviour partly to a pedantic regard for mere formalities, and partly to the fact that an unhappy dissension had arisen between him and Puky.

After the failure of his foolish attempt upon the fortress, General Welden thought that he was bound to make amends in a suitable manner. From the 1st to the 7th April, his artillery thundered almost without interruption against the town, which was already for the

most part in ruins. Thirty-six cannons of large calibre and about thirty mortars were actively employed; ball came after ball (many of them red hot); bombshell followed bombshell, so that the ground fairly trembled. We may estimate, without any risk of error, that ten or twelve thousand balls and four or five thousand bombshells fell into the fortress; but, violent as was the cannonade, we suffered comparatively little loss. For the quarter of the town into which the projectiles mostly fell was deserted, and the troops were sufficiently protected in the bomb-proof casemates, so that during the whole time of the siege, we had but few men killed.

On the 7th April, the enemy ceased firing, for the fruitlessness of his attempts obliged him to devise some other means of attack. He, therefore, opened his first parallel lines against the *tête-de-pont*, and advanced his bomb-batteries as far as Uj-Szöny, close upon the Danube, in order that, from those points, he might lay waste those portions of the town which were yet uninjured.

In the mean time, I was actively engaged day and night in fortifying the island of the

Danube, and as soon as the Austrians on the Monostor had arranged their batteries for great guns and mortars, my earthworks upon the island were pretty nearly ready. The traverses which we had thrown up were sufficiently high to check a raking fire from the Monostor, and to cover our artillery and infantry. And when it was no longer possible to hinder our works by a fire directed upon us from that commanding position, Lieutenant F. M. Simunich proceeded to occupy a farm-house upon the Csalloköz (called Sárkány's farm), and at break of day commenced a cannonade from that point against the island of the Danube. But a traverse which we had erected on that side baffled the general's attack, and when we had set fire to the farm-house above mentioned, the enemy retired back again to Duna-örs.

But now the Austrians made several attempts to cross the river in boats, and were as often driven back; though, unfortunately, our impatient Honvéds commenced their fire too soon, and scared the enemy away without doing them much harm.

By this time, Welden had exhausted all his resources for taking the fortress by a *coup de*

main; consequently, he gave up the plan as hopeless, and made arrangements for a regular siege.

And first of all, he decided upon making fortifications across the Csalloköz, namely, from Duna-örs, upon the left bank of the Danube, to the Waag. The peasants of the neighbourhood were obliged to assist in the work. However, a well-sustained fire from the island of the Danube, as well as from the Kossuth line, harassed the enemy and checked his progress.

As soon as Simunich had completed his heavy batteries on the Monostor, Mack had withdrawn the 18-pounders from the island of the Danube: "For horizontal shots," he remarked, "have no longer any effect upon the other side, and 6-pounders are enough to prevent the enemy from crossing."

But shortly afterwards, on the 2nd April, several Austrian ships laden with supplies were discharging at the Monostor, and I asked for some 24-pounders, in order to prevent the landing of these supplies.

Mack refused to grant my request, and I was obliged to make an appeal to the Committee of Defence, where my views were favourably

received, and an order was given for the guns which I had demanded. Still, as Mack hesitated about obeying that order, I could do nothing else than fire upon the towing-boats and steamers with my six-pounders. Mack asserted that the landing-place was beyond our range; but as six-pounder balls did not fall far short, it can hardly be doubted that twenty-four-pounders would have reached the point proposed. On the next day the Committee sat, and I made a report of these circumstances. The matter might have been arranged amicably; but during the debate Mack defied me, and I was obliged to accuse him of open neglect of duty. And now Mack himself demanded an investigation, which the council of war found itself called upon to grant. Captain Krivácy, now promoted to the rank of Major, took temporary command of the artillery.

The unexpected resignation of this popular officer caused a great sensation both in the town and among the soldiers; so much so, that the government commissioner thought it necessary to publish the following proclamation, for the sake of calming the discontent:—

"CITIZENS!

"The government has committed to my care the general superintendence of the fortress and town of Komárom, than which no treasure in the whole land is more sacred or more valuable. In consequence of the responsibility which my position implies, I can pass over no neglect of duty; nor is there any one here so inviolable as to be beyond the reach of my authority. Lieutenant-Colonel Mack was suspended in my presence, and by order of the Committee of Defence. He has been accused, by officers who understand the nature of the case, with having originally caused the damage from which the town is now suffering. It is further asserted that he has not displayed sufficient energy to prevent the enemy from using destructive artillery against us; that he has failed to visit the positions which were attacked; and that he has passed whole days inactively in the fortress. Believe me, citizens, law and justice shall be exercised towards every man. The case of the artillery-commander is now upon trial, and the judges will give an impartial verdict. The defence of Komárom is in the hands of honourable soldiers and officers, and I myself am on the watch. Trust me, citizens, and Komárom shall yet be rescued!

"NICOLAUS PUKY,

"*Government Commissioner.*"

"*Komarom*, 4*th April*, 1849."

This official document furnishes a general abstract of the accusations which were drawn up. But since, at the moment when it was published, the investigation was pursued merely with reference to the last count in the indictment, Mack wrote a counter-declaration, and sent it to the printer. Commissioner Puky had felt it desirable, for the sake of avoiding unnecessary discussion, to forbid all public debate upon the cause now pending. In defiance of which, the *Komáromi Értesitö* (Moniteur of Komárom) asserted the freedom of the press; and protested so steadfastly, that the unlawful prohibition was recalled. The local journal published several leading articles in favour of the artillery-commander, urged reasons in his defence, and pressed for a speedy settlement of the business. The examination was not yet brought to a close, when a report was circulated that the accused was labouring under aberration of mind. False and malicious as this statement was, it found general acceptance; and the more so, as people were disinclined to impute intentional crime to their former favourite, and were ready to adopt an explanation which freed him from moral

responsibility. Reports, more or less official, found their way even to the government; in consequence of which, a rescript came from Debreczin, suspending an order that had just been given for Mack's promotion to the rank of colonel and director of artillery. A passage from Kossuth's letter upon the business will show, at once, the noble feeling of the President, and the important position which Mack occupied in the eyes of the public:—

"I have also received," said Louis Kossuth, "the startling news, that Mack is labouring under mental affliction: if this be correct, I hereby give strict charge that the sufferer be treated with all possible forbearance and attention; for a grateful fatherland keeps watch beside his sick couch."

As we afterwards learned, the prisoner wrote many letters to the governor, none of which were delivered. It further appears that, during the blockade of Buda, he besought the government to set him free for only fourteen days; during which time he pledged himself to take that fortress with little loss, for he knew all its weak points. When Görgey came to Komárom, after the

siege had been raised, Mack flattered himself with the hope that his former friend would take an interest in his case. But, quite on the contrary, that general, in an order of the day, forbade all communication with an officer lying under suspicion of treason.

The judicial process was dragged on to a tedious length, and the prisoner still remained in strict custody. He therefore requested his intimate friend, Matthias Rózsafi (editor of the local journal so often mentioned), to go to the seat of government, and, explaining the real state of the case, to press for a speedy decision. "It is not grace, but justice, I demand," wrote the sufferer to his friend, before the latter set off upon his journey. The result of this step was, that the court-martial of appeal was ordered to meet within twenty-four hours, and to give a final sentence within forty-eight. They gave a verdict of acquittal. Rózsafi came from Világos with the judicial sentence on the very day that General Klapka gave an order for the prisoner's release; and thus, after six months' detention, Mack left his place of confinement. His pride revolted at the thought of asking Klapka

to re-instate him in his former rank: hence he gave no vote in the councils of war; but still he protested resolutely, and to the very last, against the capitulation.

One day he paid me a visit, and held out his hand in token of reconciliation. "We have been enemies hitherto," said he; "but I cherish the conviction that you have been led to act against me, not from motives of personal hatred, but from patriotic considerations of duty. Let us, at least for a time, forget our mutual differences; and if we cannot rescue our country, let us, at any rate, make a covenant to stand by Komárom" The reconciliation took place: the sequel will show whether its object was attained.

To return to the history of the fortress itself, we observe that after Mack's suspension, the new artillery-commander, Krivácy, devoted all his powers to the duties of his office; and in accordance with a plan which we drew up together, he commenced erecting mortar-batteries upon the Island of the Danube. A well-directed fire from these, and from a twenty-four-pounder battery stationed in the middle of the island, obliged the enemy to

withdraw his field-pieces from the Monostor. It is said that the Austrians honoured the fire from our heavy guns, by calling it the "slaughter-battery."

Some time previously, the Waag had risen to a great height, in consequence of the melting snow which came down from the mountains; and the whole left bank, as far as O'-Gyalla and Sz. Péter, was under water. This overflow gave us two advantages: it rendered our defence easier; for, being protected on that side, we could concentrate all our attention upon the right bank; and it favoured the secret communication of spies and couriers with the fortress. Thus, for instance, a messenger who had long ago been sent with dispatches, was able to come in; and, together with the welcome intelligence of the victorious advance of our army, he brought the cheering news that Guyon had been appointed General of the fortress, and Lenkey commander of the troops.

On the evening of the 1st April, a letter arrived from Kossuth to the government commissioner. Its substance was,—"Komárom must be held, even if the whole Austrian army

should appear before it. We are following close upon the enemy, and driving him from post to post: he has now retired to Vácz, and seems to decline an engagement. In any case, we shall send an army to relieve Komárom; and therefore the fortress must be maintained at all hazards.

"LOUIS KOSSUTH, *President.*

"*Eger* (*Erlau*), 30*th March*, 1849."

Intelligence of a similar kind was brought in almost every day, and greatly raised the courage of the besieged.

On the 7th April, the enemy ceased firing, and displayed unwonted activity in erecting batteries at Uj-szöny; while at the same time he went on vigorously working at his first parallel against the *tête-de-pont* upon the right bank.

General Lenkey, the new commander of the troops, contrived to enter the fortress in disguise upon the 10th April. After a conference with Puky, he at once called a council of war, laid before it the object of his mission, and received the command from the hands of General Török.

The office of director of the fortifications, which had been held by General Török (commander of the fortress *ad interim*), was given to the next in rank, Major Sigismund Thaly, of the engineers. The retiring commander received an order from the President to present himself immediately at Debreczin, where he was appointed general director of engineers, and justified that appointment by his talented management. A few days afterwards, Colonel Sigismund Szabó arrived to take the command of the town from Colonel Eugene Meszlenyi. In this way the conduct of the defence passed into new hands.

In order to make himself acquainted with the troops, and to observe the state of discipline, the newly-appointed general held several reviews; upon which occasions he distributed medals and tokens of merit to such officers and soldiers as had distinguished themselves.

Meanwhile the enemy had partly fitted out his first parallel with cannon, and began to threaten our *tête-de-pont* upon the right bank. To counteract this, our Committee of Defence proceeded to take necessary measures. The

posts of danger were reinforced by infantry, and the command of the batteries on that side was given to Chladek, first lieutenant of artillery. This officer, when in command of the battery upon the Raab arm of the Danube, had gained universal esteem by his unwearied zeal, his skilful management, and his intrepid courage. Chladek planted a number of additional field-pieces upon the *tête-de-pont*, and pointed them so as to act in admirable combination with the enemy's cannon. The works still needful to complete the fortification were conducted, under my superintendence, by Captain Baranyai, of the corps of engineers. And such were the judicious and unceasing operations of both those officers, that the enemy could not carry out his designs against the *tête-de-pont;* nor could he inflict any material damage, except that of dismounting a single cannon. The greatest loss which we sustained, but that was very serious, was the death of Chladek himself: a splinter from a grenade gave him his death-wound. In order to honour his courage, General Lenkey hastened to his dying bed, and gave him the rank of Captain. The old veteran, who had been

spared through the gigantic battle of Leipzig, gave up the ghost a few hours afterwards, amid the tears of all who knew him.

While these things were going on at the *tête-de-pont*, the Austrians were completing their batteries at Uj-szöny; and, shortly afterwards, firing commenced upon both sides. From this new position the enemy's projectiles could reach, not merely the fortress and the adjacent streets of the town, but also the houses which stood at the very opposite extremity. The inhabitants were obliged to flee from their houses, and almost the whole population was under the necessity of remaining in the open air, upon a vacant space called the Czigánymezö, which afterwards, in remembrance of this brotherly living together, under God's free heaven, received the appropriate name of the "Field of Equality." And it was a touching sight, to see a camp of eighteen thousand people, including old men, women, children, rich, poor, and even the sick themselves, all huddled together, with only a partial protection from the tents and booths which speedy haste had been able to erect. Had not the cannon's roar thundered forth a

mocking proof of our civilisation, the beholder might have supposed himself carried back a thousand years, to the time of the migration of nations. Those wild tribes which of yore overwhelmed the effeminate and corrupted West, were termed barbarian hordes; but do those deserve a better name who, at the present day, in useless, wanton destruction can outdo the untutored sons of dark antiquity?

Touched by the distress of their fellow-citizens, the staff-officers, who defended the Kossuth line, called upon their men to vacate some of the casemates in favour of the houseless sufferers. This appeal was gladly responded to by the generous soldiers, and they shared their dwellings with their unfortunate brethren. Major Horváth informed the Government Commissioner of this arrangement, but forgot to mention it to the commander of the fortress; whereupon ill-will and unpleasant differences arose between those two persons. And as the hospital which stood in the third fortification of the Kossuth line was filled with sick or wounded, so that no more patients could be admitted, General Lenkey ordered the fifth fortification to be cleared,

and fitted up as an infirmary. The surgeons commissioned to fulfil this order found the latter place occupied by towns-people, and reported accordingly to the commander. General Lenkey, thinking that the Government Commissioner had quartered the towns-people there upon his own authority, took it amiss, and made some very harsh observations, to which Puky replied in still more severe language. The breach which existed between them was widened more and more; so that, at length, it ended in open animosity between the military and the representative of the government: until the latter, weary of such vexations, asked to be removed from his disagreeable office, persisted in that demand despite all that Kossuth could write to the contrary, and in three or four weeks left Komárom altogether.

The long-expected moment of Komárom's relief was near at hand. Spies had been sent to bring the welcome news of the decisive victory gained by our army on the 19th April, at Nagy-Sarló. On the following day, as, in company with Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Esterházy, I was inspecting the works upon the Waag

arm of the Danube, the sentinels, posted upon the fortification, announced that a division of cavalry was approaching. At first, we surmised that General Welden was about to attempt a second edition of the prowess which had distinguished him upon the 31st March; but some minutes afterwards, we descried the uniform of hussars. General Guyon, that gallant and heroic Englishman, had hitherto sought in vain to arrive at his new destination; but, after the victorious engagement at Nagy-Sarló, in which he himself had taken an active part, he advanced with undaunted resolution, at the head of a squadron of hussars, broke through the enemy's besieging lines, took a company of Austrian infantry prisoners, and appeared in triumph before the walls of the besieged fortress.

The wild, unbounded joy felt by the garrison and town of Komárom beggars all description. Without waiting for any word of command, and as though struck by an electric flash, the cannons' mouths resounded loud and clear; to which, responsive, the batteries of the startled enemy gave answer from the right bank of the river. A livelier cannonade

than this cheering salute of the Hungarian artillery, had hardly been heard during the hottest days of the actual siege.

Guyon received the command of the fortress from Lenkey, who in turn took the command of the troops from Colonel Kosztolányi.

On the next day, 21st April, the people of the neighbouring villages brought information that the enemy had abandoned his lines of circumvallation upon the left bank, and had crossed over to the other side, at Almás, below Kornárom.

In recognition of past services, and particularly for his fortification of the Island of the Danube, as well as for his defence of the *tête-de-pont*, the new governor promoted Major Thaly to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel of Engineers.

While the general was consulting with me upon the best means of driving the enemy out of the island of Csalloköz, news was brought to him that the vanguard of our army was close at hand. In order to facilitate its passage, as well as that of the main body, which was not far in the rear, Guyon ordered me to lose no time in throwing bridges over

the Zsitva and two other streams. I accomplished my task, and at night-fall the victors of Nagy-Sarló arrived at Komárom, and marched in amid the thousand-fold cheers of the besieged.

This was a proud moment for our army. Four months previously, it had been small in numbers, untrained, driven back before a superior force of disciplined enemies: an uncertain future was before it, and the feeble band was obliged to abandon Komárom to its fate. But now the little one had become a mighty army, well exercised, and animated by lion-hearted courage; now it pressed unceasingly upon the once-haughty foe, came in to the rescue, and could stretch forth a helping hand to the fortress in its hour of need. The toils of the winter campaign, and the victories which followed thick upon one another, had hardened our young soldiers, and made them irresistible in the fight.

Wretchedly clad and shod, the army had waded through deep snow or treacherous marshes, exposed to a cold which descended in January to 20 degrees Réaumur, and which was followed in March by violent rain-storms:

had borne hunger and thirst; had passed the frosty nights without tent or covering; and often had been obliged to sleep under free heaven, upon the damp ground, without so much as a fire to cheer them. Those who had undergone such hardships must necessarily be proof against any privation. Strict discipline, and the success of their arms, had invigorated the confidence of these warriors, to say nothing of their enthusiasm for the cause.

We had commenced to act upon the offensive in the early part of March: the six short weeks which elapsed between that time and the 19th April were quite enough, with such troops, to crush the enemy in five pitched battles, which were fought successively at Hatvan, Tapio-Bicske, Izsaszeg, Vácz (Waizen), and Nagy-Sarló. Each honvéd, each hussar, proved himself a hero. In rags and barefoot though he was, yet, conscious of intrinsic merit, he held his head erect, and thought twice before he would condescend to bestow the title of *pajt' ás* ("comrade") upon his brother soldier of Komárom. For the garrison, although by no means provided with all necessaries, made a brilliant appearance in

comparison, and almost looked like troops guarding a fortress in time of peace: therefore the conquerors at Izsaszeg and Nagy-Sarló would hardly recognise the clean uniforms as having any thing like the same rights with themselves. And not until the guests had been a few days in Komárom, when they actually saw the fearful devastations which had been made—not until they heard from the besieged how hard the lot of soldiers in a fortress really is, and how painful it must be to stand constantly exposed to the fire of the enemy, without being able to make a sally against the hostile cannon which are spreading death and destruction—not until they understood all this, did the proud victors look upon their besieged comrades with proper respect. A sally which was soon after made against the Austrians in the island Csalloköz, entirely broke down their reserve, and showed them that the garrison was no less bold in the attack, than steadfast in defence.

On the 23rd April, General Lenkey, with the troops of his garrison, attacked the enemy in the Csalloköz; and, after a short resistance,

drove him from his fortifications, and compelled him to retreat in disorder. Their bridge at Leel was destroyed; and their boats, laden with ammunition, were fired by grenades, and blown up: they had been lying at anchor before Gönyö, and the explosion unavoidably caused the destruction of several houses in the village.

The fortress was now free on this side also; but still the enemy occupied the right bank. On the 22nd, General Görgey, commander-in-chief of the army, had taken up his head-quarters in Komárom. On the next day he sent a written order to me, as director of the fortifications, commanding me, on pain of death, to throw a bridge of rafts over the right arm of the Danube, within forty-eight hours. In my reply, I told him that the bridge could be ready within the given time; but that it would not be advisable to make a bridge of mere rafts over so broad a stream as the Danube: for in case of a sudden storm, or if our troops were interrupted in their passage, and were crowded upon it, which was not an impossible supposition, the rafts would sink, and the army would be lost either in whole or

in part. I further suggested that it would be better to send the troops over by night in boats, especially as the means of transport at our command were sufficient for the purpose. To these representations the commander-in-chief briefly answered,—that he hoped the weather would be favourable, that there was no fear of the troops being driven back, and that in this matter he released the director of fortifications from all responsibility.

What insolent presumption and reckless frivolity is couched in these few words! As if a man, undeservedly raised to the command of an army, could rule the elements also; or as if, by untoward accidents, the very best-disciplined battalions might not be thrown into disorder. He released me from all responsibility; as though a patriot cared for his own life, when the fate of an army was at stake, and when the destiny of his fatherland depended upon the well-being of that army.*

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* Before Görgey was appointed commander-in-chief, he had not a single victory to boast of. The storming of Branyicz-ko, in January, 1849, was owing to the valorous conduct of Guyon; for during that engagement Görgey sat still at head-quarters. He took no active part in the

When the enemy perceived that we were about to attempt a passage, he naturally used every effort to hinder us from making a bridge. From various points, eight-and-forty cannons, of large calibre, together with six bomb-mortars, opened a deadly fire against our first operations. But Captain Paul Mazur, to whom I had entrusted the immediate management of the construction, displayed such admirable bravery in face of the enemy's extraordinary attack, and evinced so great a degree of foresight and skill, that all the measures taken by the Austrians were of no avail. For after he had collected all his boats and rafts in the left arm of the Danube, and under cover of the walls of the fortress, he waited till night-fall, when the firing ceased; after which he began putting his materials together, and successfully finished the work that very night.

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battles at Hatvau and Bicske, came in at the end of the fray at Izsaszeg, looked on while Damjanics took Vácz, and remained at head-quarters when Damjanics, Klapka, and Guyon crushed the Austrians at Nagy-Sarló. But yet, for all those deeds of arms, Görgey was the man who, as superior general, earned the greatest fame and the highest distinction.

Although Görgey had released me from all responsibility, yet I felt it necessary to take all precautions against the danger above alluded to. For at least one-third of its length, the bridge rested upon boats, the other two-thirds being supported by rafts; and in addition to this, I had eighteen large boats in readiness to ferry the infantry across, so that the bridge might remain entirely free for cavalry and artillery.

In the evening, between the 25th and 26th April, the passage over to the right bank was effected in strict order: after sunset, the attack commenced. As, however, the account of this battle belongs rather to the history of the campaign, than to the chronicle of Komárom, I shall confine myself to general observations upon the events and the issue of the conflict.

While the Knezicz division stormed the village of Uj-szöny and the redoubt No. 8 (called the Igmandd fortification), at the point of the bayonet, Major Géza Kún, at the head of his own and of two other battalions, crossed the river in boats at Örs, climbed the steep heights from the river-side, advanced at quick

march, drove the Austrians from their fortifications, and occupied that commanding position.

When the Austrians had thus been driven from their line of defence, they again took up a position in the Á cs wood, upon the Puszta Herkály, and on the road towards Mócsa. While the battle was raging at these points, an accident happened, about twelve o'clock, upon our left wing, which unluckily justified my presentiments. One Hanover regiment of hussars and the Polish lancers, being attacked by a superior force of Austrian cavalry, took flight, and rushed in great disorder back towards the bridge The rafts, not being calculated to bear such a violent and sudden pressure, of course gave way, and threatened to sink with the weight upon them, had not the pioneers, whom I had posted there in case of need, furnished immediate assistance. The parts of the bridge which had been loosened were joined together again, and made fast with cramp-irons, while the horsemen who had taken flight were brought behind the fortifications, arranged in rank and file, and then led afresh into the fire.

About six in the evening our men were victorious on all points. The enemy retired in hot haste along the high-road to Györ (Raab), leaving behind all their tents, and all their materials for fortification. Besides this booty, five cannons and a large quantity of ammunition fell into our hands.

The forces which we had engaged in this battle, were our first and third *corps-d'armée*, together with a brigade of the eighth (garrison) corps. The seventh, under General Gáspár, was not in the action, although it stood in the neighbourhood, at Bátorkeszi. It is true, that General Lenkey, upon his own responsibility, sent, about twelve o'clock, to General Gáspár, requesting him to advance; but he did not make his appearance until the fortune of the day was decided. Still, these fresh troops ought to have followed up the dearly-bought victory. Even Austrian officers have confessed that their troops were demoralised by the successive defeats which they had met with; and that, after the battle of Komárom, all discipline being completely broken through, their men arrived at Györ disbanded, and in utter disorder. Hence a vigorous

pursuit must have destroyed the enemy. Strange to say, the commander-in-chief allowed this favourable opportunity to pass unimproved.

Whether this neglect was the result of treachery, or whether it was owing to want of judgment, Görgey was evidently unfit to hold the generalship any longer.

I was so fully impressed with this conviction, that on the next day I wrote a letter to the Governor of Hungary, detailing the events of the battle, and exposing the conduct of the commander-in-chief, whom I denounced as incapable, if not traitorous. I further declared my readiness to accuse him, and to prove him guilty before a court-martial; adding, that as Görgey was alone to blame for not making Komárom an Austrian Waterloo, he ought to be punished.

The Government Commissioner, Puky, made a similar report to Kossuth.

But an individual in the governor's chancellery (*Kanzlei*) secretly sent a copy of my letter to the accused general, who in the mean time had been made Minister-at-War. After the taking of Buda, and during his ill-fated

battles upon the island Csallököz, Görgey remained several days in or about Komárom, and took the opportunity of calling me to account. The reader will allow me to give the substance of the conversation which passed between us.

I happened to be going on business to the residence of Colonel Asserman, who was then commander of the fortress *ad interim*, and just as I arrived at his house, he came out in company with Görgey: in two words I despatched my business with the colonel, saluted both as my superior officers, and was retiring, when Görgey called me back:—

"Your commands, General?"

"I hear, Lieut-Colonel, that you write newspaper articles against me."

"I write nothing without signing my name to it; and I am not aware that any article of mine has been published against the Minister-at-War."

"If you have written no articles in the papers, you have at all events been sending a letter to the governor."

"Certainly. I have written to the governor about the battle of the 26th of April: and if

a garbled account has been sent to the Minister-at-War, I can supply him with an exact copy of the original."

"I know every word of your letter: it contained the most serious charges against my person."

"I have only stated my convictions."

"Your convictions seem to lead you into squabbles with every one. You can agree with no commander whatever."

"I beg to refer you to the commander of the fortress, who is present; he will tell you that perfect harmony subsists between us."

Colonel Asserman confirmed my words.

"I am glad to hear it," rejoined Görgey. "Union among the officers is the first condition of success, particularly in a garrison. That you cannot keep terms with Guyon is to me a matter of no surprise, for I myself cannot endure him."

"Guyon's political principles are my own: we had, besides, a personal love and respect for one another; but we disagreed in our official capacities, because he, as commander of the fortress, wished to interfere with the direction of the fortifications."

"In admitting that you share Guyon's political opinions, you accuse yourself. For precisely in this respect I differ from Guyon, and, consequently from you. The fortress of Komárom is too important, and the post you fill is too considerable, to be occupied by a man who entertains sentiments at variance with mine. I must remove the Lieut-Colonel from his office."

"Nevertheless I remain true to my convictions; if they displease the Minister-at-War, remove me from my post; then will I seek another field of action, and serve my country there."

"How lightly you talk, Sir Lieut-Colonel. You must know that I am not to be dealt with so easily: I am like the eel *which slips from the hands of its enemies*."

"It is all one to me, Sir General, whether you are an *eel*, or a *snake*. I obey my convictions, and if the Minister-at-War cashiers me, I will go as representative of the people to the National Assembly, where, at all events, I can speak my mind. Besides, I am upon good terms with the actual commander of the fortress, and I trust that there will be

no cause of complaint as regards the manner in which I have discharged the duties of my office."

"I hope so too. Let us be good friends, and serve our fatherland as well as we can. Do the works go on well? Are you in want of anything?"

I then explained how the fortifications were proceeding, and remarked that the supplementary pay for the officers had been stopped by Guyon; upon which Görgey ordered the commander of the fortress to pay the arrears, to settle the account in future every month, and requested me to apply to him in case of future need, and went his way with Colonel Asserman.

We return from this digression to take up the thread of our narrative.

I have mentioned above, that Görgey, after the engagement of April 26th, neglected to pursue the enemy at once: but what judgment must we pass upon his talents as a general, nay what opinion must we form of his honesty, when we see that he now gave up all thoughts of following the enemy's disorderly retreat, and, instead of marching upon

Vienna, was for turning eastward with the main body of his victorious army? The question was debated in a council of war. Görgey voted for the siege of Buda; but the advantages of an attack upon Austria were so evident, that all present, including his own partisans, declared in favour of the latter plan, and he was obliged to give way. Already the army had made preparations for setting out next morning, when the commander-in-chief triumphantly proclaimed that a letter had arrived from Governor Kossuth, ordering him to take the fortress of Buda. However unwillingly, all the officers were constrained to bow before the command of the chief magistrate. No one thought of doubting that an order had been really received, or that its tenor was not quite the same as had been represented. And yet, far from favoring the construction which Görgey had been pleased to put upon it, Kossuth's letter, as it afterwards appeared, directed that the enemy should be pursued without delay, but that Buda should be surrounded by Aulich's army, which was lying before Pesth, and, if possible be stormed. Görgey read and construed the

letter as he thought proper: for as Damjanics had received a wound in his foot, and Klapka had been dispatched to represent the minister of war at Debreczin, no one remained, with the exception of Nagy Sándor, who felt disposed to give an independent opinion.

Thus Görgey set off with from twenty-eight to thirty thousand men, including six hussar regiments, for the purpose of besieging Buda, while a corps under Colonel (afterwards General) Pöltenberg occupied Raab.

SECTION III.

FROM THE RELIEF OF KOMÁROM, TO THE SECOND SIEGE.

The cannons' thunder had died away, and once more Komárom breathed freely after its manifold troubles. While the unhappy townspeople, with renewed spirits, were restoring their shattered dwellings, the work of fortification went on likewise, with renewed energy. The Austrian besieging lines had to be destroyed: the enemy, however, had scarcely finished their first parallel, and had not completely armed even that. On the other hand, it was necessary to improve the advanced works, which formed our entrenched camp. With the aid of a couple of thousand men I finished the task in a few days.

It may be calculated, that from the 7th to the 26th April, the number of bombshells and grenades thrown into Komárom was

about 3000, while that of balls amounted to 13 or 14,000. From the beginning to the end of the siege, perhaps 7, or 8000 projectiles may have been thrown in, together with 23 or 26,000 balls.*

In order to preserve chronological order, we will throw a hasty glance upon the state of political and administrative affairs.

After the victory of the 26th April, the whole district of Komárom fell into our hands. Now Dionys Pázmándy (who unmindful of

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* I cannot avoid noting an incident which took place during the bombardment, as it furnishes an instance of desperate courage, or rather of that composed resignation arising from a belief in the doctrine of predestination. During the earlier period of the cannonade, a large number of persons were sitting in a coffee-house of the so-called Racz-utcza, when suddenly a sixty-pound bombshell broke through the roof and floors of the house, falling down at the feet of the assembled company. All present seemed turned to stone; pale and motionless they gazed upon the fearful instrument of destruction; one and all seemed devoted to inevitable death: another moment, and they will all be mangled corpses. At this juncture, the proprietor of the coffee-house, Johann Mayer, took his chair, placed it immediately over the bomb, crossed his arm and sat down, crying out in piteous tones, "Fulfil thy mission!" The bombshell did not burst.

his high calling, had abandoned his seat as president in the Chamber of Representatives, had procured a safe conduct from Windischgrätz, and had even publicly expressed his willingness to serve the enemy), was living at this time upon his estate near Komárom.

Puky called upon General Guyon to give military assistance to the justice of peace who was commissioned to apprehend the ex-president. Accompanied by Captain Louis Nagy, and a company of Hunyady hussars, the civil officer went to Kömlöd, and brought back the criminal to Komárom, where he was lodged in the county jail. Guyon insisted that Pázmándy should be tried before a court-martial, which Puky refused to allow, and sent the prisoner to the seat of government at Debreczin. Puky did this, for the sake of complying with legal forms, but at that time he was not aware that the criminal had taken part in a secret meeting which was held at Tala, where negociations had taken place respecting a supply of materials necessary for the siege of the fortress. To crown all, Pázmándy did not blush to excuse his abominable conduct by a confession of personal cowardice; yet he was acquitted by

the committee of inquiry, and inferentially by the ministry. After this, and many other examples of a like kind, furnished by the Hungarian Assembly and its agents, whoever will persist in comparing that Assembly with the French Convention during the reign of terror, must certainly give up all pretensions to the art of drawing historical parallels, or at least confess that he allows unlimited scope to the exercise of a bold imagination.

About this time, as before observed, the difficulty which arose between Puky and the military authorities, was aggravated day by day, so that he was obliged to lay down his commission, and go to Debreczin, where he resumed his place in the Chamber of Representatives.

It is but justice to say, that Puky, by his patriotic conduct, and his active watchfulness at Komárom, deserved well of his country. In one respect, however, I think that he made a mistake. For instead of choosing tried and decided men as members of the County Committee, his choice too frequently fell upon high conservatives who were opposed to progress and to reform. His ignorance of the

condition in which the country was before March 1848, and the suggestions of certain advisers led him into error.

The ministry appointed as his successor the prefect (*Obergespan*) of Sáras, Ladislaus Ujházy. For many years he had been a champion of the reform party, and this noble veteran distinguished himself in the war of independence, by youthful fire, republican sentiments, and unbending firmness of character.

No sooner had the war-office heard of Komárom's deliverance, than an order was sent down to erect a permanent fort upon the Monostor. But considering the possibilities of a second siege speedily taking place, the local committee thought it more advisable to fortify the entrenched camp with new redoubts, in order to insure immediate protection for the proposed works. This representation was assented to; the plan was materially altered, and the business was commenced with renewed zeal. Night was turned into day, no trouble or labour was spared, and on the 20th of May the redoubts were completed. Major May, of the general's staff, rendered most effective assistance. The redoubts were mounted under

the able management of Major Krivácsy, and by the end of the month the whole of the right bank was in a state of defence, while both the town and the inner fortress were prepared against a new attack.

Still Komárom had a weak side; we mean the island of Apália, in the left arm of the Danube (Waag-Danube). When the Austrian engineers had constructed the Palatinal line, they proposed a *tête-de-pont*, but did not make it. The pressure of circumstances did not permit us to carry out the plan which they had sketched. I therefore contented myself with field fortifications, with the erection of a block-house, and a covered way leading to the bridge over the Waag arm of the Danube. At the same time I repaired the ramparts, the barracks, etc., which had been injured during the bombardment.

Meanwhile General Klapka came to Komárom, having been appointed commander of all the troops upon the left bank, and governor of the fortress. He therefore took the place of General Guyon, the previous governor, and gave the immediate command of the fortress, under himself, to Colonel Assermann.

He then went round with me to inspect the works, and as the entrenched camp was already in a state of defence, he wished that the projected plan for erecting a casemated blockhouse upon the Monostor should no longer be delayed. I acknowledged the force of his observations; and we set to work discussing the plan. The general, at first, was in favour of building it in the Müller style. But inasmuch as we were constantly wanting trunks of trees for similar buildings upon the Apália island, as well as in redoubts No. 4 and 8 (on the road to A'cs, and to Nagy Igmánd) and consequently had none to spare, it was decided that the blockhouse upon the Monostor should be built of stone.

After this Klapka hastened to Györ for the purpose of inspecting the 7th army-corps.

In a few days I sent a sketch of the projected blockhouse to the new governor, and as he approved it, I submitted the same to General Gaal, the director-in-chief of engineers, who also reported favourably, and sent it back to the local director for execution.

First of all I officially requested the government commissioner to place at my disposal

ten thousand hod-bearers, with twelve hundred masons and carpenters. Ujházy sent to the municipal authorities in the mining districts, to the county authorities of Komárom, Esztergom, Pesth, Fehérvar (Weissenburg), and Weszprém, and also to the towns in the neighbourhood, requesting an immediate supply of skilled workmen, while the hod-bearers were collected in Komárom itself, and in the neighbouring districts. In the mean time I got together materials for the work.

The seats of the Komárom representatives being vacant in the Assembly, a writ came down from the president for a new election: two citizens, and two superior officers of the garrison were chosen. The Tata district gave its confidence to Count Paul Esterházy, while that of Nagy-Igmánd elected Lieut-Colonel Sigismund Thaly. But a sudden change in the fortune of war would not allow them to quit their military posts.

When Buda had been taken, after an irrecoverable loss of precious time, Görgey at length began to make offensive preparations against the Csalloköz, and the right bank of the Danube. The active part taken by a

division of the Russian army in the engagements which followed, together with the news that an enormous Muscovite host was concentrating in Galizia, and in the principalities of the Danube, opened up the prospect of a gigantic battle for life or death. And while I doubled my diligence inside the fortress, I thought it right to direct attention beyond my own immediate sphere, and to consider the necessities of the army itself. Hitherto, when our armies had to cross rivers, they were obliged to get together ordinary bridges of rafts or boats, as well as they could, for the occasion; they carried no pontoons with them, although General Lenkey had taken a few from the Austrians at Örs. I proposed, therefore, to organise this department of the service.

I immediately drew up a plan, calculated for the extreme width of the Danube, and submitted it to the War Office, stating the probable expense. But the gentlemen in that office took no less than three weeks for consideration, pointed out some failures in my drawings, and sent it back for improvement. A few days afterwards, the government left Pesth for Szegedin, and the events of the war

followed one another with such rapidity, that the execution of my plan was now impossible. Had I in the first instance addressed myself to the president and pressed the scheme upon his attention, instead of obeying the prescribed injunction of the ministry, the result would have been far different. For whoever was able to direct himself to Kossuth personally, was sure of obtaining a speedy decision.

Ujházy had displayed great energy in collecting the necessary hands, and about the middle of June I commenced building upon the Apália island; at the same time beginning the blockhouse on the Monostor. The foundation stone of the latter had the following inscription:—

"In the third month of Independence, dating from the dethronement of the godless Hapsburg-Lorraine house, which was decreed 14th April, 1849, and under the administration of Governor Louis Kossuth, this was built by the Komárom Committee of Fortification."*

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* After the capitulation, the Austrians ordered this blockhouse to be removed; "the foundation stone with its treasonable inscription was not to be suffered, and must be got out at any cost."

The building went on vigorously until the 2nd July. After that date, when the enemy commenced annoying our workmen with grenades, I was obliged to continue with a much smaller number of hands. By the month of October, that is about the time of the capitulation, the blockhouse was in a tolerable state of defence, and the trench could be strengthened by provisional wooden galleries. Besides the breastworks, there was an interior wall, and six eighteen-pounders were planted there ready to receive the enemy. The soldiers were to be housed in huts built of planks for about three weeks, until the proper building was completed for them. General Gaal inspected the works, and expressed his satisfaction both with the plan and the manner in which they were carried out.

We here leave our description of the engineering, in order to give a general view of events taking place in and about Komárom.

As before mentioned, the troops who had stormed Buda were advancing by slow marches along the line of the Upper Danube. The

position of the Hungarian army was as follows:—

On the right bank:

7th Army-corps (General Pöltenberg), in Györ and the neighbourhood . . 9000 men.
Division under Colonel Kmdetty, at Téth Marczaltö . . . . . 5000 „

In the Great Csalloköz:

Kosztolányi's division (of the 8th army-corps garrison troops), at N. Megyer, Szakállas, and Nemes-Bogya . . 4000 „

On the left bank:

3rd Army-corps, under General Count Leiningen, at Ujvár (Neuhäusel) . 8000 „
2nd Army-corps, under Colonel Asboth, at Taroskegy and Tóth Megyer . . 7000 „
1st Army-corps, under General Nagy Sándor, at Urmény and Mocsonok . 9000 „

Eight battalions, the residue of the 8th army corps remained in garrison as a reserve. Colonel Horváth with 1000 men were skirmishing upon the Nyitra, and Major Herman Görgey with 1600 were moving about in the mining districts.

The whole army was 49,600 strong, including 6000 horse, and 208 field-pieces.

On the other hand the Austrian army took up the following defensive position:—

On the right bank, from Mosony (Wiesel-burg), over Ovár (Altenburg), along the road from Györ to Posony; and with small detach-ments of *mobile*, along the Rabnitz line as far as Soprony (Oedenburg); in the Little Csalloköz, Hedervár; in the Great Csalloköz, the line from Bös to Vásárút: on the left bank, the line of the Waag, from Farkasd to Freistadh.

In the beginning of June, Lieutenant Field-marshal Welden gave up the chief command to Haynau. Towards the middle of the same month, the Austrian army had been reinforced by new troops, and by the Russian division (Paniutine), which was 15 or 16,000 strong, so that their forces now amounted to 66,000 men.

Besides these troops, who enjoyed a fine central position about Posony, General Nugent was marching with a reserve corps upon the Balaton Lake, while the Russian general, Grabbe, with 18,000, men marched through the country of Arva into that of Lipto.

The interval from the end of May, or the

beginning of June, when the Hungarian army took up its position, to the middle of the month, was devoted to completing our battalions. Görgey tarried in Pesth, while the central Chancellery, which he had instituted under the directions of Colonel Bayer, remained at Tata, forty miles below the army, and sent its orders from there.

To have a clear view of the position and forces of the hostile armies, requires a knowledge of certain events which belong more properly to a complete history of the campaign. The nature of this work will allow me to do no more than present a summary to my readers; but the part taken by our garrison in the various engagements, and the connection which existed between the army and the fortress, forbid me to pass these things over in silence: I shall, however, observe the limits which the nature of the case prescribes.

On the 12th June, one of the enemy's columns advanced along the Soprony road as far as Csorna. Col. Kmetty crossed the river Raab, attacked the Austrians before Csorna, and stormed the place after a bloody battle of several hours. General Wyss, the

commander of the Austrian forces there engaged, was left dead upon the field.

This slight advantage cheered our drooping spirits, but had no decisive influence upon the opening campaign.

The action at Zsigárd was of far greater importance. With this, the Hungarian army commenced the series of its unsuccessful offensive operations upon the right bank of the Danube.

On the 16th June, Colonel Asboth with a column 4000 strong, marched against Királyrév, drove back the Austrian vanguard, and stormed Zsigárd at the point of the bayonet. But soon strong reinforcements of Austrians appeared from Dioszegh, and he was compelled to retire.

In order to assist the 2nd army corps, under Asboth, in their operations upon the Waag, Klapka had ordered the garrison troops under Kosztolányi, to give the Austrians employment in the Csalloköz. But as the enemy had taken up a strong position at Bös, this movement produced no effect, and Kosztolányi was obliged to fall back upon his previous position at N. Megyer.

On the same day the 1st army-corps, under Nagy Sándor, advanced from Mocsonok against Schemed, drove the enemy from his entrenchments, but was eventually obliged to give ground before a renewed attack of the Austrian reserve.

General Knezich, of the 3rd army-corps, neglected to support our men upon this occasion.

If, even after the time lost before Buda, a victorious advance upon Vienna was still possible—and I certainly believe that it was—it could have been done only by a concentration of all our forces, and along the right bank of the river. The left bank presented numerous hindrances to offensive, and great advantages for a defensive system of operations, to say nothing of many other essential points in the case. The attack upon the Waag line should have been nothing else than a manœuvre to mask our real designs. But, unhappily, Görgey and his Central Chancellery did not take this natural, but important view of the circumstances.

On the 19th of June new arrangements were made and given out for the following

day, according to which, Colonel Asbóth, with the 2nd army-corps was to cross the Neuhaus arm of the Danube at Aszód, while the 3rd, under General Knedzich, was to pass over the Waag, at Negyed. Klapka occupied the Csalloköz, and protected the passage at Aszód, chiefly with garrison troops, only four battalions being left behind in the fortress.

Görgey had left Pesth to come and take the command in person, but up to ten o'clock in the morning he had not appeared upon the field, and therefore Asbóth gave the signal for attacking the enemy's position at Pered. The columns, animated by the bold example of their leader, took that village, which was obstinately defended by the enemy, and occupied it before the 3rd army-corps came up.

When, at length, Görgey came upon the scene of action, he immediately found fault with Asbóth's premature attack, and eagerly seized the opportunity of ridding himself of an able officer, who was more attached to the cause than to his person: he broke Asbóth, and gave the command of his corps to Kászonyi, a colonel of hussars. And in place of Knedzich, who was likewise no favourite of his,

he appointed to the command of the 3rd army-corps Colonel Count Leiningen, who was devoted to him heart and soul, though otherwise a brave and distinguished officer.

On the next day, when a Russian division had come up, the enemy attacked us with redoubled force, drove back our wearied troops, and compelled Görgey to fall back upon the fortress. The loss in these battles was about two thousand five hundred dead or wounded.

On the same day, General Klapka had a severe encounter at Aszód. He stood firm, and covered Görgey's retreat over the bridge there. The Austrian commander-in-chief, leaving a corps on the left bank of the Danube, and in the Csalloköz, threw his main force upon the right bank, and, on the 26th of June, stood upon the road leading to Györ. A speedy concentration of all our forces around Györ might have given another turn to the affair; but the Central Chancellery judged otherwise, or, rather, seemed to have lost all sense and judgment whatsoever. In face of the united Austrian and Russian troops, Györ was left with its previous garrison, consisting of our 7th army corps.

It is evident, that under such circumstances, the valour of our Honvéds and their officers, among whom Alexander Kossuth particularly distinguished himself, could not hold the town. On the 28th of June, Haynau entered Györ, while Pöltenberg, after a determined resistance of eight hours, retreated fighting along the Gönyö road. The advance of the Austrians from Posony was the signal for a general advance of the enemy on all sides. On the north, the main body of the Russians, eighty thousand strong, under Paskiewitch, marched upon the capital of the country: our corps of observation, numbering scarcely eighteen thousand men, withdrew before this superior force, as far as Czegléd, about forty miles from Pesth, and effected a junction with a reserve of from sixteen to eighteen thousand men, which had been organised by Perczel. In the south, Jellachich pressed forward with forty thousand men, though Generals Guyon and Kmetty, with far inferior numbers, under the chief command of Vetter, endeavoured to make head against him. The Transylvanian army, under the glorious Bem, was seriously threatened by a superior Russian force.

Nothing but a speedy junction of all the Hungarian forces could save the country from destruction, and the government saw the necessity of this in time. A council of war, held at Pesth, by Kossuth, at which, besides the ministry, several generals were present, decided upon carrying out this plan without delay. They sent Generals Kiss and Aulich, together with Minister Csányi, to Görgey, ordering the latter to leave eighteen thousand as a garrison in Komárom, and to march along the left bank with the rest of his troops towards Pesth. The commander-in-chief spoke obedience, but broke his word, and still remained in Komárom, to hazard another battle, under the guns of the fortress, although he had already abandoned the road leading from Györ to Pesth, and sent advice of the same to the government, with a recommendation to take care for their own safety.

About eight in the morning, the Austro-Russian army left their positions at Igmánd and A'cs, to make an attack upon our entrenched camp. Our force, at the latter point, consisted of the 2nd, 3rd, and 7th army-corps, with four battalions of the Komárom garrison,

altogether, twenty-two thousand men, four thousand horse, and one hundred and twenty-four field-pieces. The enemy numbered fifty thousand men, and yet, strange to say, the remaining division of the Hungarian army was not brought over from the left bank.

During the first half of the day, fortune favoured the Imperialists. On the left wing O'-szöny, and on the right wing the villages lying before the Monostor, fell into the enemy's hands. But soon new battalions sallied from the entrenchments, and regained the lost positions. About 7 o'clock in the evening, Görgey, at the head of twenty-four squadrons of huzzars, tried to break through the enemy's centre. Several attacks were successful, and the Austrians were thrown back: already the bold hussars had dashed upon the Russian reserve posted at Csém, when suddenly the enemy unmasked their batteries, dealt a murderous fire, and compelled our men to retreat. The loss on our side may have been fifteen hundred and sixty dead or wounded, that of the enemy about double the number.

On the same day letters arrived from

Kossuth, dated the 1st of July, 1849, announcing that, in place of Görgey, General Mészáros had been appointed commander-in-chief. The commanders of corps were called upon in the name of their fatherland to obey this arrangement, but Görgey was still to retain his portfolio as war-minister.

The new commander-in-chief, on arriving at Almás, heard the cannon's roar, and erroneously supposed that he could not reach Komárom; he therefore went back to Pesth without doing anything.

On the following day, the 3rd of July, Klapka, as senior officer after Görgey, invited the commanders of corps and older staff-officers to a council of war, in the camp before redoubt No. 8. He laid before them the subject of deliberation, and stated that it was advisable to divide the two dignities (of commander-in-chief and war-minister) which Görgey had united in his own person; but, led astray by partisans of the latter, he at length proposed to send a remonstrance against the government order, and to request that Görgey be allowed to remain at the head of the army. A resolution was passed

accordingly, Klapka and Nagy Sándor being commissioned to convey it to the government. The two deputies were still in Komárom, when new orders arrived from Kossuth, and from General Meszáros, dated 3rd July, in which Klapka was commanded to remain with 18,000 men in Komárom, while Nagy Sándor was to lead down the other army-corps. In spite of this, both generals set off for Pesth to fulfil the commission with which the Council of War had charged them.

The government, however, would not give way any further than that Görgey should be permitted to retain command of the upper army, under the supreme command of Lazarus Mészáros as Captain-general of all the Hungarian forces.

The two deputies on coming back to Komárom, informed Görgey of the will of the government. At the moment he declared himself satisfied, but soon after in a close council, at which the commanders of corps and Colonel Bayer were present, he proposed to set aside the government order, because in his opinion operations upon the right bank promised greater advantages than a concentra-

tion of our forces in the region of the Tisza (Theiss). His powers of persuasion bore down all opposition. But in the evening a new order came from Buda-Pesth, dated 6th July, signed by Governor Kossuth, and counter-signed by Szemere, the president of the ministry. General Klapka was therein called upon to take the command of the army, and to march from Komárom the next day, "as the salvation of the country (so it said), depends upon this movement." Such a remark should have kept the general in mind of his duty, especially as the following passage in the same document furnished him with ample justification in resisting the partisans of Görgey:—"Since the Council of War has to do merely with military operations, you will take care that their debates are confined to this their legitimate sphere, and not allow them to indulge in criticising the decrees of the Assembly and the Government, for such a course is in direct contradiction to the nature of military operations. You will, under the heaviest responsibilities, attend to and enforce these regulations. I only regret that this has not hitherto been the case."

Klapka was himself fully impressed with the urgent importance of this high summons, and without Görgey's knowledge gave orders for marching, for, as he was now commander-in-chief, why had he any need to give account to a predecessor who had been set aside by the government? Therefore at four o'clock in the morning of the 7th July the first army-corps was in marching order, and the rest were shortly to follow.

No sooner had Görgey, who was lying wounded, received intelligence that the troops were setting off, than he sent in his resignation, and informed his partisans of that step. Immediately Leiningen, Pöltenberg, and other staff officers ran to General Klapka to persuade him that he ought to recall the order which he had given. Now was the time for opposing a firm unbending will to unlawful suggestions. But Klapka possessed, only in a small degree, that sturdy mood which men call moral courage, and in face of Görgey's confederates, he did not show a spark of it. Instead of enforcing strict obedience to the order which had come down from the government, as his responsibility should have obliged

him, and as his position empowered him to do, he consented to recall the troops, although they had already begun their march; he allowed the officers to hold a meeting for the purpose of choosing a deputation, which should wait upon Görgey begging him to remain at the head of the army; was himself present at the meeting, and to crown all, actually accompanied that deputation to Görgey's quarters. *Inde derivata clades!*

In vain General Klapka tries in his "Memoirs of the War," to excuse this fatal weakness by laying the blame upon certain mutinous officers. In unison with General Nagy Sándor, and at the head of an army enthusiastically devoted to their country and to Kossuth, he only needed energy to carry out Kossuth's order for the salvation of the land. No doubt several very able staff officers would have resigned in consequence. It is also true that Görgey, by continually pouring contempt upon civilians and the civil government, and by playing his part so admirably in the late comedy, had incited many brave men against Kossuth and the Assembly. But this dangerous feeling did not extend much beyond

head-quarters. The troops, from the common soldier to the captain, feared the commander-in-chief, but loved him not; while they adored Kossuth with boundless admiration. Most of the staff entertained the same sentiments, and in Nagy Sándor's corps, including the general himself, there was not a man that liked Görgey. The loss of superior officers would, in the first instance, have been sensible, but not irreparable. In the month of January many very able officers left the army at Vácz, but their places were soon supplied with others. *Possible* therefore the task certainly was, though it required a *good* and also a *firm* will. To excuse himself Klapka reproaches Kossuth for not having come in person to the army, there and then to deprive Görgey of his powers. This accusation is very strange in the mouth of one whom Kossuth had fully empowered to act in his place, and who had promised to discharge his duty.

As might have been foreseen, Klapka's weakness hardened Görgey in disobedience. The concentration was delayed so long that it became impossible. Hence the defeat at Temesvár, the surrender at Világos, the fall

of Hungary! How different must have been the fate of the nation, had Klapka appeared upon the scene of action with 28 or 30,000 tried warriors. Had he done so, I am convinced that Hungary would not now be wearing the Austrian yoke.

Thus Görgey remained commander-in-chief, and as before, neglected or despised the orders of the government, which was now obliged to move its quarters from Pesth to Szegedin, whither also the army under Perczel and Wysocki retired. But Görgey determined to make a new attack upon the Austrians, which he did upon the 11th July, and of course unsuccessfully. The plan promised little to begin with, but the dispositions drawn up by Görgey, Central Chancellery, were so fool-hardy, as to stamp the whole undertaking with the character of downright madness. Klapka foresaw the end of all this, and tried to turn Görgey from his purpose; and yet after all, in spite of his better judgment, he undertook to lead the attack. He had not courage enough to crush Görgey and his creatures; but that weakness carried within itself the seeds of its own punishment; against his

own conviction he was obliged to be the tool of Görgey.

The 3rd Austrian corps, under General Ramberg, marched away, and there remained before Komárom, under the command of Haynau, two Austrian corps and the Russian division Paniutine. It was decided to break through these forces on the 11th July.

Not to enter into details belonging to the history of the campaign, we remark, in general, that our troops were drawn up in the entrenched camp. Janik and Esterházy's divisions (garrison troops), took part in the battle; the former with Rakovsky's division, under the command of Colonel Assermann, formed the right wing, while Colonel was to make a demonstration from O'-szöny against Almás. That part of the garrison not engaged in the field, remained in readiness in the fortress. About nine o'clock our battalions advanced from the entrenched camp. General Klapka in person led the centre, and about noon came up with the enemy at Csém. At this point both sides concentrated their main forces; 140 field-pieces were contending for the victory, without gaining any decisive

advantage. Owing to the delay of General Piquetti, who failed to bring his cavalry to the charge, the two wings could not keep the ground which had been won, and were obliged to give way. The fruitlessness of this attempt to break through, became of course as clear as possible, and there was a general retreat at all points. About 1,500, dead or wounded, increased the severe losses which we had suffered during the previous few weeks.

This check produced at length, though now too late, that which neither a feeling of duty nor the repeated orders of the government had been able to effect. On the 13th of July, we see Görgey leave Komárom, taking with him the first, third, and seventh army-corps, viz., 26,000 or 28,000 men, and 120 or 125 cannon. The columns marched along the left bank over Bátorkeszi towards Vácz. The second and eighth army corps remained in garrison. The second corps, under Colonel Kâszonyi, having suffered from disease in the swamps, near the Waag, and afterwards in battles before Komárom was reduced one-half, and consisted of:—

	Men.	Horses.	Guns.
10 Battalions, of hardly 400 men each . .	4,000	„	„
6 Squadrons of Würtemberg hussars of 100 men	600	600	„
2 „ Boiskay hussars „	200	200	„
1 „ Kúok hussars „	100	100	„
4 Batteries of six guns each	360	„	24
Total	5260	900	24

The 8th Corps under Colonel Asserman numbered:—

12 Battalions of 600 men each	7,200	„	„
5 Squadrons of 100 „ each . . .	500	500	„
4 Batteries of 6 guns .	360	„	24
1 Battalion of Sappers and Pioneers . . .	800	„	„
6 Companies of Artillery .	1,200	„	„
Total	10,060	500	24

A few days before Görgey's departure 3000 recruits came in to complete the battalions; hence the whole garrison numbered 18,200 men, with 1,400 horses, and forty-eight

field-pieces. On the ramparts and in the entrenchments there were 300 heavy guns; and forty or fifty field and battering pieces were just mounting. Between 4000 or 5000 muskets were in hand. There was a supply of flour, peas, and beans for four months; meat for three months; wine for three months; hay and straw for two months; wheat, oats, barley, and salt in abundance. Manufactories of muskets and percussion caps, as well as powder mills were in construction or at work. We had 1000 cwt. of powder, and 1000 cwt. of saltpetre.*

The following arrangements were made for the occupation and defence of the works:—

Colonel Kászonyi commanded the entrenched camp and the *tête-de-pont* of the Danube: with him were the divisions of Janik, Rakovski, Kosztolányi and Mándy, altogether thirteen battalions and six squadrons. The Palatinal line was held by Lieut-Colonel Horváth with five battalions and three squadrons; while the

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* I remark in general that here and there I make no scruple to borrow word for word from the statements made by General Klapka in his "Memoirs," when they are in accordance with my own data and my own views.

inner fortress and the *tête-de-pont* of the Waag were occupied by Colonel Count Paul Esterhazy, with four battalions and three squadrons.

Lieut-Colonel Szilányi was chief of the general's staff, and Lieut-Colonel Prágay was adjutant. Lieut-Colonel Jungwirth commanded the artillery in the fortress, and Lieut-Colonel Krivácsy directed the field batteries and outworks. Lieut.-Colonel Thaly was local director of fortifications.

On the 16th and 17th Haynau withdrew from his position, and marched along the right bank towards the capital, leaving behind the second Austrian army-corps, under Csorich, to besiege the fortress; this corps took up the following positions:—

On the right bank, at A'cs, Herkály, Csém, and Mocsa. Barko's brigade of six battalions.

In the Csalloköz, at Lél, Aranyos, Guta, and Keszegfalva; Liebler's brigade of five battalions.

On the left bank, at first in communication, by way of Guta, with the Csalloköz, but afterwards in the line of Martos, O-gyalla,

Sz. Péter, Hetény, and Kurtakesz; Pott's brigade of six battalions.

The besiegers had forty field-pieces and forty battering guns. Their large park of artillery was only then getting together at Posony.

They had six squadrons of horse, and the whole besieged force was about 16,000 men.

While the main body of their army was before Komárom, the Austrians had begun to throw up entrenchments near the A´cs wood, at Csém and Herkály; and in the Csalloköz at Aranyos and Keszegfalva.

At Lovad, an Austrian bridge united the Csalloköz with the right bank. The *tête-de-pont* at Nagy Lél was well built, and strongly armed with battering guns. All these works were pushed vigorously after Haynau's departure, and about the end of July were nearly finished.

Papers which afterwards fell into our hands showed that Haynau, relying upon credible (?) information, estimated the garrison at 6000 or 8,000 men, and those mostly recruits. To hold them in check, he left behind 14,000 to 15,000 Austrians, while he marched off with the main-

body of his army. His conduct did not reflect much honor upon his generalship. For if Haynau believed that there was so feeble a garrison at Komárom, he must have drawn the inference, that the fortress could not hold out at all points against a force so superior; and that against the whole Austrian army it could not defend even the right bank of the Danube. If so, any other general would have renewed the attack upon the Monostor, which failed upon the 2nd July, and have tried to gain the whole right bank. For once possessed of that essential post, the besiegers would have been able to contract their lines very materially, to pursue the siege with fewer troops, and to commence a destructive fire from the heights so taken.

But if, on the other hand, the renewed attack had again failed, then Haynau would have learnt that the garrison was *not* composed of from seven to eight thousand recruits, and that, therefore, the double of fifteen thousand men were necessary in order to ensure communication with Vienna, and to avoid such a defeat as that of the 3rd of August or perhaps even worse, had Klapka only made a sally at the proper time.

To take all possible advantage of the enemy's mistakes, is the first rule in war. In the present instance, the low estimate formed by the Austrian general, and his erroneous plan of operations grounded upon it, offered the finest opportunity of giving a favourable turn to our affairs.

When the scheme of concentrating our armies had failed, as above mentioned, one last ray of hope and safety for his fatherland still beamed in Kossuth's patriotic soul. "Only gain time," cried he, with anxious voice to the Hungarian leaders, "that, and that alone, is the task you have to perform." The governor was right, but the men to whom he spake understood not this warning voice, which had been addressed both to the generals in the field, and to the commanders of fortresses.

No one was in a better position to do this service to the government, than the commander of Komárom. The strength of that almost impregnable fortress, and the force of the garrison, contrasted with the small number of the besiegers, made it Klapka's imperative duty to seize with mighty hand the rolling wheel of fate. The design of a fortress

is not merely to defend itself, but also to second the army in its operations. If so, we cannot doubt for a moment as to the part which Komárom ought to have played.

As soon as Haynau had left with the main body of his army, the besieging lines should have been attacked; and that our superior forces would have ensured a favourable issue is amply proved by the decisive victory which we gained on the 3rd of August. But so early as the 17th or 18th of July, the besieging corps might have been broken, or even destroyed. Then, leaving behind eight thousand men in the fortress, the victorious general could have surprised the enemy like a flash of lightning from an unclouded sky, by appearing upon his rear as he was hastening on towards the heart of the country.

The line of retreat, and all communication with Vienna being cut off, or, perhaps, anxious for the safety of the Imperial city itself, Haynau would have been obliged to send back a considerable part of his army, and likewise be very cautious how he moved a single step in advance. The results of such a movement are beyond all calculation; one thing, however, is certain, that time would

have been gained. Perczel would have got his recruits ready for action, and Kossuth would have called to arms a reserve of thirty thousand men, whom he hoped, and with good reason, to bring into the field in less than a month.

Once more, Klapka had an opportunity to do his fatherland essential service: but again his weakness allowed the favourable moment to pass. One of those eventful moments, so rare in the lives of men, was thus neglected and unimproved. The Sibyl had appeared for the third time, holding in her hand the last three books, in which was written, "Give not the fortress up; or at least sell it dear:"—but again the favorite of the gods repulses the prophetess—the last three books also are committed to the flames.

In order to prove that Klapka might have given a different direction to the fortune of the campaign, and that he failed to do so through weak indecision of character, we must explain the true state of affairs to our readers.

In an accusation of this kind, the first question naturally is, did the accused know the difficulties, and had he the means of overcoming them? It is easy enough for us,

looking back upon all the circumstances, to point out faults: but our judgment cannot be just unless we place ourselves exactly in the position of the accused.

According to Klapka's own account (*Memoirs*, p. 194, of the German edition) the garrison numbered eighteen thousand two hundred men, and forty-eight field pieces, while the force of the besiegers amounted to no more than from fifteen to sixteen thousand men, and was divided into three parts, which were posted in different positions, as above explained. The reader will be good enough to refresh his memory by looking back to the description of the Austrian positions (at page 160), in order tha the may be better able to follow me in my reasoning.

Now, supposing each Austrian battalion to have numbered nine hundred men, it follows that they had upon the right bank, at the very most, five thousand four hundred infantry, with a division of cavalry from two hundred and fifty to three hundred strong, and three or four batteries. This small detachment was all they had to keep up communication with Vienna, a thing essentially necessary for the main body of their army. They could, how-

ever, in case of need, reckon upon the brigade in the Csalloköz, for they had thrown a bridge at Lovad, over the arm of the Danube, and could draw help from the island.

The evident duty of the commander of the fortress was to destroy that bridge, and so cut off all help from the quarter above mentioned, in which case the brigade upon the right bank could have been easily destroyed or made prisoner.

This must be clear to every one, that to surround the enemy by night, to break down the bridge in his rear, and at the same time to charge him in front, was a plan certain of success; and all the more because we could bring against him a force three times his superior in point of numbers. For eighteen battalions, twelve squadrons, and forty-eight field pieces might well be opposed to six battalions, two squadrons, and two or three batteries.

The next question is whether Klapka knew the weakness of the enemy, and was aware that we could fall upon his rear unperceived. The usual means of ascertaining the condition of an enemy's forces, are to send trusty spies, or carefully to dispatch a secret reconnoitring party. In this instance, both means were

abundantly at our disposal. The population, willing to devote life and property for the holy cause of freedom and independence, were eager to render the necessary service.

So early as the 18th of July, men and women from the neighbouring villages came to me in the fortress, to say that the numbers of the enemy were very small, and that a whole army might pass unperceived over Naszály, Tömörd and Nagy-Igmánd, and so fall upon the enemy's rear. I took these people to General Klapka, bade them repeat what they had said, and, as I had known them all from my boyhood, I could vouch for their truthfulness.

Klapka heard the news with gladness, but failed to take any advantage of it. On the 20th and 21st, equally trust-worthy persons came, giving the same information to the general, but still he persisted in doing nothing. On the 22nd, 23rd and 24th, the people of the neighbourhood grew bolder, and brought provisions, fowls, swine, etc. into the fortress; which was a clear proof that they had been able to come in without let or hindrance. At length, as Klapka himself confesses, (in his *Memoirs*, p. 194), the result of an excursion

made by Colonel Kosztolányi, against Dotis, dissipated all further doubt. On his march there and back the colonel had met with no besieging forces, and returned in perfect safety to Komárom, bringing with him the prisoners captured at Dotis, as well as considerable booty.

Colonel Kosztolányi had made this excursion with eight Honvéd companies, four field-pieces, and one division of hussars. He found no garrison in Dotis, but merely a transport which had just arrived and which immediately surrendered at discretion. Some weapons and a considerable supply of provisions fell into our hands, as well as the mail coach which was charged with money and letters. Among the papers was an order respecting the operations of the siege, and the document above alluded to, in which it appeared that Haynau estimated the force of our garrison at six or eight thousand ill-disciplined recruits.

It was now impossible to delay any longer. This opinion I constantly expressed among my friends, and especially to those staff-officers who saw Klapka every day. At last of all, on the 29th, my friends told me that the

general had decided upon attacking Pott's brigade on the left bank next day, and that his arrangements were partly made. The same Klapka who had most decidedly opposed Görgey's foolish and unsuccessful engagements on the left bank and in the Csalloköz, was now all at once going to tread in the same footsteps. The defeat of Pott and his whole brigade put together, promised very small advantages compared with the result of offensive operations upon the right bank. For by the latter course, Haynau would be cut off from communication with Vienna, and the main body of his army would be paralysed; whereas the total destruction of Pott's brigade would produce no result of the kind, or at least in a minor degree. Why go roundabout to work, why lose time in beating about the bush, when the result could be obtained by straightforward action? The fate of the nation depended on each day, each hour: every moment told in the scale of fortune.

When I found that my own representations had no effect, I besought Colonel Esterházy to explain the reasons for an attack upon the right bank, to urge them upon the general's attention, and to show him the absolute

necessity of altering his arrangements. Esterházy was convinced of the importance of these things, and tried to persuade Klapka, but, alas! without effect.

The attack upon Pott's brigade took place on the 30th. Klapka states (in his "Memoirs," p. 102), the dispositions which he made, and gives the description of the battle as follows:—

"Colonel Rakowski will leave the camp at two in the morning, with three battalions, six field-pieces, and a division of hussars; he will cross the river Zsitva, drive the Austrians from that point, and directing his march to Sz. Péter will outflank the enemy's left wing.

"Colonel Kosztolányi with a similar force, will leave two hours later, will advance along the high-road to Sz. Peter, attack the enemy at Hetény, and effect a junction with Rakowsky.

"Colonel Schultz with two battalions, six field-pieces, and a squadron of hussars, will act as a reserve to Kosztolányi's column, and support it in the attack upon Hetény, by covering its flank towards O-Gyalla and Martos.

"At six in the morning Kosztolányi had

engaged the enemy, driven the Austrians from Hetény, and pursued along the high-road towards Bajcs. The Austrian columns which advanced from Martos and O'-Gyálla, were held in check by Schulz, and were soon driven back across the Nyitra.

"Had Kosztolányi not followed the enemy so hastily, but allowed time for Rakowsky's corps to surround them, there is no doubt but that we should have either routed or captured the enemy's columns, which had taken up a position on the (Ujvár) Neuhäusel road towards Bajcs as it was, they suffered no great loss, beyond being obliged to retreat to Ujvár, whither they were pursued by our hussars and some field-pieces, and lost about 150 prisoners. The forces of the Austrians in this action amounted to five battalions, six field-pieces, and a division of lancers. The left bank was now cleared, for the Austrians retreated by night to the Waag.

"At the time when this battle was going on, I (Klapka) sent Colonel Horvâth with two battalions, four guns, and a division of hussars to make a demonstration against Aranyos in the Csalloköz. Here also the Austrians were

driven back, but after receiving reinforcements, they obliged the small detachment to retire within the fortress.

"The left bank being now free, communications were opened with the villages on that side, and large purchases of provisions were made.

"In the night of the 1st August we attacked Keszegfalva, and compelled the Austrians to make a hasty retreat over Guta."

Soon after this, Klapka decided upon making a decisive attack against a besieging army, and in consequence of some remarks which I made to Esterházy, he sent for me. I explained what I thought would be the best manner of making the attack, and he promised to execute what I proposed. On the evening of the 2nd August, he assembled the superior officers in redoubt No. 8, and he gave his order for next day's operations. But what was my surprise to learn, that, with a view of falling upon the enemy's rear, he intended to send his columns over Almás and to drive the enemy from that point, whereas I had proposed to march by night in the rear of the enemy over Naszály, Tömörd and

Nagy Igmánd, so as to hasten on and occupy A'cs and the Lovad bridge. I remonstrated with Klapka, saying, that to send all the columns over Almás would defeat the object we had in vew; for as their force at that place consisted merely of three companies of infantry, one of cavalry, and three six-pounder cannons, a small detachment would be quite sufficient to hold the Austrians in check at that point.

In support of my opinion, I assured General Klapka that I knew every inch of the ground, having been born and brought up in the neighbourhood, and that I was perfectly certain his plan would prove a failure. For as soon as ever the columns appeared upon the heights beyond Nagy Igmánd, which are known as the Ördög-hegy (or Devil's hill), the enemy must necessarily see our advancing troops, and perceiving the danger immediately begin a retreat to the Csalloköz. And let the columns make as much haste as they liked, they could never reach the bridge in time to prevent that retreat; hence the plan must fail, at all events in part. However, Klapka disregarded my warning, and persisted

in his own opinion. In page 208 of his "Memoirs," the orders which he gave, and the actual engagement are thus described:—

"Colonel Assermann with two columns, each consisting of twelve companies and six field-pieces, severally commanded by Rakowsky and Brunswick, will leave the entrenched camp at midnight, and advance by way of O'-Szöny to Almás, whence, after taking the enemy's posts, he will proceed along the by-paths to Tömörd and halt there, until he receives advice that Mócsa is in our hands. After which, he will march on Igmánd, keeping constantly in the rear of the besieging army, and then advance towards A'cs and Lovad, doing all in his power to gain the heights in front of the latter place before the enemy can reach them, and so cut off their retreat to the Danube.

"Colonels Kosztolányi and Krivácsy, with two columns, of equal strength with the former, and under the personal conduct of the superior general (Klapka), will advance at seven in the morning upon Mócsa. They will storm that place, effect a junction with Asserman, and attack Csém. They will then

join Colonel Schulz's advancing column, will carry the entrenchments of Puszta-Herkály and the A'cs wood, and drive the enemy into the Danube, or upon the columns which are operating in their rear.

"Colonel Schulz, with eight companies, two squadrons, and eight guns, will advance along the Igmánd road against Puszta-Herkály, where he will engage the enemy until our troops have taken Csém and have come to be in the same line with him, when he will support them in attacking the entrenchments at Herkály and the A'cs wood.

"Lastly, Colonel Janik with sixteen companies, one squadron, and two howitzer batteries, will make a demonstration in front of the entrenchments at the A'cs wood, but will not actually make an assault until Csém and Herkály have been taken, and the enemy's right wing has been surrounded.

"Two companies from each battalion will remain as a garrison in the entrenched camp.

"In accordance with these instructions, the attack took place:—

"At midnight, Assermann mustered his columns in O'-Szöny, and marched upon Almás,

where he surprised the enemy's detachment (consisting of three companies, one squadron, and three field-pieces), stormed the place after an obstinate resistance, and allowed the enemy, whose retreat was covered, to retire along the road to Esztergom.

"Going on from this point he gained the heights of Tömörd, where he stood at nine in the morning in conjunction with Kosztolányi.

"Meanwhile, Kosztolányi's and Krivácsy's columns, protected by the heights before them, had advanced to Mócsa, where three companies of the Baumgarten regiment surrendered to them after a short resistance. They then took up a position on the hill near Igmánd, waited till Assermann came up, and forming a double line of battle, with cavalry on both wings, went on to Csém.

The entrenchments in Csém were feeble, and the enemy left them before we could make an attack. At three in the afternoon, we had occupied that place, our storming columns were all united, and Assermann's columns were already marching upon the rear of the Austrians. If Assermann, who was

habitually over-cautious, should not lose time on this occasion, there was no doubt that all the besieging forces upon the right bank would be obliged to lay down their arms.

"Unhappily I could not wait long, for I feared that the enemy (who had concentrated their forces at Puszta-Herkály, and who were but partially occupied in front by Schulz and Janik), would at length perceive Assermann's columns, and understanding the object of our manœuvres, would commence a retreat without waiting for my attack.

"Therefore at five in the afternoon, without paying any further attention to Assermann, I gave the signal for the attack.

"Our advancing batteries were greeted with a lively fire from the entrenchments, and the enemy's artillery being heavier than ours, did considerable damage to our ranks. I saw that there was no time for delay, and ordered my storming columns forward, at the same time sending instructions to Schulz to attack the entrenchments in front. Schulz discharged his duty heroically; to him and the few troops he led, belong the honors of the day. Forming in battle array, with

artillery and cavalry on both wings, and merely sending forward a weak line of *tirailleurs*, these brave soldiers, unflinching amid a fire of grapeshot and musketry, advanced with the war cry, *Éljen à Magyar* (Hungary for ever), up to the very breastworks of the enemy. The Austrians, startled at this bold onslaught, and fearing that the other columns would surround them, gave up defending their entrenchments, and fled in disorder towards A'cs. The victory was ours.

"From Herkály, which was the highest point of the besieging line, our artillery scattered death and destruction among the fugitives. The A'cs Wood also was taken. All fled towards Lovad. Our batteries gave chase, and from point to point, as the nature of the ground permitted, belched forth a devastating fire. Our hussars and infantry pursued unsparingly, and the field was strewed with dead and wounded, with swords and muskets, cannons and waggons of ammunition. Crowds of prisoners were brought in from all sides. The foe tried to make one final stand at A'cs, but was soon dislodged by our batteries. Nothing now was left them

but swift flight across the Danube; this though at great sacrifice, they effected, for Asserman's column had not yet reached the heights of Lovad."

Important as were the consequences of this day, the capture of the *whole* force of the enemy would have given not only much more brilliancy, but much more real weight to the victory. And I am perfectly certain that if Klapka had paid attention to the advice which I gave, and which was founded upon an accurate knowledge of the country, we should have succeeded in accomplishing that rare feat of arms, which is thus alluded to in his own words:—

"At the moment when the last Austrian column was crossing the bridge, Assermann's troops commenced firing upon the enemy. Had he arrived but half an hour sooner, we should have had to boast of that rare, and perhaps unexampled feat, namely, that without the aid of any new forces coming to the rescue, a besieging force had been captured by the garrison alone, and brought prisoners into the fortress."

I conceive by my statement of the circum-

stances, I have clearly proved that no general was in a more favourable position to gain time for the government, than was Klapka in this affair of Komárom. On the 18th July, he had the same forces at his disposal as he had upon the 3rd August; at the former date the numbers of the besieging army were as small as they were upon the day when they took to flight, leaving behind their guns and ammunition. Nothing but indecision prevented Klapka from effecting the same result fifteen days before. *Fifteen days before!* These three words form the spell which might have charmed and averted the danger; but now the rueful and fatal reproach of *too late* was again terribly justified.*

I have above explained the advantages promised by well-timed operations: the

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* "Too late!" that is the history of the whole war. An early occupation of Croatia would have prevented the invasion of Jellachich. Again, in October 1848, we might have marched upon Vienna and taken it, before a junction had been effected between Windischgrätz and Ausperg; *fourteen days* later we were defeated at Schwechat. In April 1849 Görgey had Vienna at his mercy; but he wasted time in going to besiege Buda, and the glorious opportunity passed by;—and so in almost every case.

consequences of delays are confessed by Klapka's own words:—

"With bleeding heart I write it, my couriers, who were sent with news of our victory on the 3rd August, did not arrive in time to prevent the ill-fated surrender at Világos. It was upon Turkish ground that Kossuth learnt of the victory and its consequences, while Görgey heard of it at Nagy-várad (Grosswardein) after he had done the shameful deed."

I do not wish to add poignancy to Klapka's grief, but I must accuse him of being indirectly the cause of these misfortunes.

After a day's rest, Klapka set out on the 5th August for Györ with ten battalions, six squadrons, and thirty field-pieces, and arrived there the next day. Colonel Assermann remained in Komárom with eight battalions. The Csalloköz was occupied by four battalions, three squadrons with six field-pieces.

I have strictly censured Klapka's faults, but I am equally ready to exalt his praiseworthy conduct in other respects. When he arrived at Györ, he took means to levy recruits, not only for the garrison at Komárom, but

also for the field, in order that he might make a diversion in favour of our army, which was at the river Tisza (Theiss). In the counties which were free, all the fighting men, between the ages of eighteen and thirty were called out. The enthusiasm of the people to defend their liberty was beyond description. In a few days five to six thousand men were enrolled and sent to Komárom, where they were formed into five new battalions, armed and made ready for service. Besides, Klapka ordered Lieut.-Colonel Mednyánsky to organise the revolution at the Balaton (Platten) Lake, and joined to his own army the free corps which had been raised and led by Noszlopy, the Government Commissioner and Military Commander of Somogy.

This corps consisted of three thousand recruits, armed partly with muskets and partly with scythes; they had a hundred horses, nine one-pounders, and one *wooden* six-pounder cannon. The enemy's entrenchments at A'cs, Aranyos and Lél were razed, and the the supplies found in Györ were sent to Komárom.

The time was come for the proposed

diversion. Without giving any opinion as to what might have been done, we merely state that the general intended to march through the Vas (Eisenburg) county into Styria.

The 12th August was fixed for beginning the march; but on the preceding evening Paul Almàsy, a representative of the people, came with news that Dembinski was defeated at Szöreg, Nagy Sándor at Debreczin, and that an Austrian division, under Jablonski, was advancing.

This obliged Klapka to give up his plan. He left Györ on the 13th, and on the 16th all the troops were assembled in the fortress of Komárom.

When Görgey had laid down his arms, the enemy lost no time in sending news of the same to Komàrom, with a summons to the garrison to follow his example. On the 19th, by the order of his commander-in-chief, Lieut. Field-Marshal Csorich, General Liebler, sent the bearer of a flag of truce to treat of a surrender, with an assurance (says Klapka), of unlimited grace on the part of his gracious Sovereign. A council of war was held, and

answer was given to Liebler, that as no official information had been received from the Banat or from the Lower Danube, no thoughts of negociation could be entertained. Meanwhile, the enemy had received reinforcements from Austria and Bohemia; on the 16th they occupied Györ, and on the 19th they had advanced as far as A′cs.

Together with the three brigades which were marching on under Nugent and Jablonski, the whole besieging force now amounted to nine brigades, that is three times their previous strength Besides which the Russian corps of eighteen thousand men was coming against us from the mining districts. In the afternoon of the 20th, the enemy took up a position before the A′cs wood, at Herkály and at Csém; they then sent two officərs to the fortress, Count Alcaini, an Austrian Colonel, and Lieut.-Colonel Isakoff, an adjutant of the Czar, who had just arrived from the Russian head-quarters, demanding a surrender.

The council of war abode firm by its declaration which had been sent the day before to General Liebler, and the two officers went

back as they came to A′cs; but returned next morning with a proposal from the Austrian War Minister, Gyulay, who was at the Austrian head-quarters, that an armistice should be concluded, until a deputation sent by the garrison had gone to the south and convinced itself of the real state of affairs.

The proposition was accepted by the council of war, and an armistice was concluded for a fortnight, with a condition that either party might recommence hostilities at forty-eight hours' notice.

According to agreement, the Austrians then occupied A′cs, Igmánd, and Tata (Dotis), on the right bank; Apácza-Szakálas and Gúta, in the Csalloköz; and the Waag line, on the left bank of the Danube.

The Russians under Grabbe advanced in the line from Léva to the town of Nyitra. The following was declared neutral ground:—the right bank; that part of the Csalloköz which was between the *rayon* of the fortress and the Austrian lines; the left bank, between the rivers Waag and Nyitra; and the parts between the roads from Uj-vár to Esztergom, and from Léva to Nyitra.

The deputations were now sent to examine the state of affairs: Lieutenant-Colonel Rutkay and Csapó, the sub-prefect of Sz. Fehérvár (Stuhlweissenburg), were sent to Görgey; while citizen Sigismund Katona, of Komárom, and myself, were commissioned to betake ourselves to the fortresses of Arad and Petervárad, and then to the Banat and Erdély (Transylvania).

The Austrians furnished Katona and myself with passports, and committed us to the care of Major Liebler. We commenced our journey on the 22nd of August.

When we arrived at Arad, we found that the fortress had been surrendered, and we received full confirmation that Görgey had laid down his arms.

But Haynau most decidedly refused to allow us to continue our journey to Petervárad, the Banat, and Erdély. From this refusal, and from the reports of many well-intentioned, though, as it afterwards appeared, misinformed patriots, we naturally inferred that the war was still going on in those parts of the country.

Upon the occasion of our visit, the Commander-in-Chief, Haynau, gave full play to

the brutal feelings of his low-minded nature. When we were first presented to him, he began to browbeat my colleague, who was not a military man, because he presumed to appear before such a presence in civil costume; and then went on to scoff at the misfortunes of an enemy, once feared, but now laid low.

I asked permission to see the exact condition of the army which had laid down its arms, of the fortress Arad, and to confer with General Damjanics. "Eh, Eh! what general?" cried the brute; "he is no general; he is my prisoner, you cannot see him." When we had seen the fortress and the army, we paid him a second visit; and he asked if we were now convinced that the Hungarian army was annihilated. We replied, that we were convinced of nothing but that Görgey had surrendered, and that Arad had been given up, and we hoped that he would allow us to continue our journey. "That I will not," said he; "go back to Komárom, and say that the garrison ought to surrender, for no longer does a Hungarian army exist." We said that we could not make such a report with a clear conscience. "Then I will put you all to the edge of the sword," he

replied: "I will massacre every one of you!" When we took leave, he gave us a summons of surrender, addressed to Klapka, as well as a second paper, containing free pardon for us both, in case the gates of the fortress were opened within forty-eight hours after our return, or failing in that, on condition that we left the fortress. At the first moment, I was inclined to tear the base document in pieces; but, reflecting that it was better to retain a proof of the perfidious arts made use of by our enemies, I took it with me.

In the villages and towns where we stopped on our return, the poor despairing people crowded around our carriage; for the national uniform which we wore everywhere attracted a large concourse, and particularly in Pesth. A thousand questions were addressed to me, the most common being, "Is there any hope?" "Komárom yet stands," was my constant reply; for which I was thanked by a silent but hearty pressure of the hand, while tears rolled down many a manly cheek. At my hotel, I was visited by hundreds of ladies and gentlemen, eager to make inquiries about their friends: one had a brother, another

a husband in the fortress, concerning whose fate they were naturally anxious. But all bade us be steadfast, and hold out to the end. Some officers of Görgey's late army, who were already enrolled in Austrian regiments, gave me letters for their old comrades in Komárom, wherein they conjured the latter, for God's sake, to take warning by their example, and never to trust the Austrians, upon any pretence or consideration whatsoever.

We returned to Komárom about the end of August, and found the minds of the troops depressed, but not utterly cast down. During our absence, the bearer of a flag of truce had come to the fortress, and brought to Klapka the well-known shameful letter of Görgey, in which the traitor indirectly encouraged his former colleague to follow his base example.

We made a faithful report of all we had seen in the south; we detailed the conduct of Görgey, and the surrender of Arad. But the disarming of *all* the troops, and the flight of Kossuth with the *last* band of warriors to Turkey, were circumstances of which we had no knowledge; and we even had reasons to suppose that the case stood otherwise.

After our return an answer was sent to Haynau's letter, telling him that an unconditional surrender was out of the question; upon which Csorich proposed that the conditions of a surrender should be communicated to him, in order that he might submit them to the higher authorities. Consequently, a council of war was called, on the 1st of September.* After an animated discussion, it was resolved, by a majority of two voices (if I mistake not), that the fortress should be given up, upon honourable conditions. They were as follows:—

"COUNCIL OF WAR OF THE FORTRESS OF KOMÁROM.

"*Conditions upon which the fortress will surrender to the Imperial Austrian troops.*

"1st. An amnesty for the nation.

"2nd. A free pardon for the whole Hungarian army, without exception of nationality, for those who have already surrendered, or for those who may hereafter do so; immediate liberation of Hungarian prisoners.

"3rd. Recognition of the Hungarian paper money.

"4th. Free choice of abode, either at home or abroad, and the grant of passports, for those who may choose to leave the country.

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* In presence of the officers then assembled, I tore up the safe conduct which Haynau had given me.

"5th. Free departure of the garrison with all military honours.

"6th. A month's pay for the officers: ten days' pay for the privates. To be paid in a currency which will bear value abroad as well as at home.

"7th. Each man shall retain private property.

"8th. Ratified copies of this treaty of capitulation to be exchanged within eight days from this date, that is, up to the 8th September, 1849.

"9th. Complete amnesty for the town of Komárom and its inhabitants; with a discounting of the paper money issued by the governor of the fortress.

"10th. Indemnity to those contractors who have made bargains with the authorities of the fortress.

"*Komarom*, 1*st September*, 1849.

"For the assembled Council of War of
Fortress of Komárom,

"KLAPKA,
"*Hungarian General.*"

Even before this, when the fourteen days' armistice was under consideration, I had expressed my dissatisfaction; upon the present occasion, also, I was in the minority, and took part in the deliberations, merely with a view of doing all in my power to insert the most favourable conditions possible.

The gallant Government Commissioner Ladislaus Ujházy was likewise opposed to the capitulation. In order to save the wreck from total destruction, he proposed that the Council of War should add the two following resolutions:—1st. That the garrison would treat immediately with the Emperor of Austria himself; 2nd. That the guarantee of England for a faithful observance of the treaty should be an indispensable condition. He further suggested that two officers should be sent with a copy of the conditions to the Emperor of Austria, with a remark, that unless a favourable answer was returned within eight days, the negotiations should be broken off, and that those *should be beforehand declared traitors*, who should speak of changing the conditions, or even of having any further dealings with the enemy in the way of surrender.

On the next day, Colonels Estérházy and Kászonyi conveyed a copy of our conditions to the Austrian Commander-in-Chief, and at the same time gave him a letter from Klapka, from which we make the following extract:—

"Enclosed are the terms on which the fortress of Komárom is ready to treat. If you accept

them before the armistice expires, we will open our gates to receive the Austrian troops. If not, we shall know our duty as soldiers, and remain true to the nation which has entrusted this precious treasure to our care." General Csorich assured the two officers who bore the despatches, that he would do all in his power to procure a favourable consideration in high quarters; but he doubted whether the conditions would be accepted in their present form.

After despatching this treaty of capitulation to the Austrians, General Klapka sent a copy of it to the Governor of Petervárad, and advised him thus:—"I call upon you, in the name of our country, and your honour, to make our terms the basis of your own negotiations, otherwise to fight for life or death, and rather be buried beneath the ruins of your fortress than surrender."

Soon after the return of the two colonels, Haynau sent to us from Pesth a summons of unconditional surrender, to which, as before, we gave a decided refusal.

At noon, on the 2nd of September, the time had arrived for giving warning that the

armistice was about to expire; and accordingly General Csorich sent the following notice:—

"*Dotis, 2nd September*, 1849,
"*Twelve o'clock at Noon.*

"The armistice expires on the 4th instant, at noon; and as your terms do not agree with our summons of unconditional surrender, the armistice will cease at the time mentioned.

"CSORICH."

At this signal, the necessary operations were resumed; the troops, which during the armistice had been cantoned in the villages on the left bank, were marched into the fortress; the works were manned more numerously than before; the outposts were doubled, and the fortifications on the Monostor were carried on with fresh energy.

About this time old General Nugent took the command of the siege, and with the numerous troops under his orders completely surrounded the fortress. The Austrians occupied Almás, Mocsa, Csém, Puszta-Herkály, A'cs, and the island of Csalloköz, from Aranyos to Keszegfalva; while the Russians advancing under Grabbe took the Zsitva line, with the villages Zsitvatö, Kurtakeszi, O'-Gyalla, and

Martos, leaving their reserve troops at Sz. Péter.

On the 7th, an Austrian flag of truce brought official information that Petervárad had surrendered at discretion. Nugent summoned us to do the same; but, as in previous instances, a negative answer was returned.

In spite of this seeming steadfastness, there were sundry tokens of hopelessness and wavering in high quarters. Of course not much resolution was needed to reject an unconditional surrender, as the captivity of those officers, who had laid down their arms at Világos, was rather cautionary than cheering. Truly patriotic contempt of death, and firm decision, would have put a higher construction upon the matter. Hungarians who had Zrinyi's glorious example before them, soldiers who had sworn not to give up the fortress until a breach had been made in the walls, should have found sufficient reason for breaking off all communication with the enemy; if not before, at all events when he haughtily persisted in his outrageous demands. Honour, as well as the resolutions already passed, should have given this counsel. And even if any

were insensible to higher considerations, the consciousness of having twenty-eight or thirty thousand men in an impregnable fortress, should have been more than enough to forbid all thoughts of further negotiation.

On the 19th, an Austrian flag of truce brought in a letter from General Ernest Kiss, who was a prisoner at Arad. He had been weak enough to believe the insinuations of his jailers, and fancied that the freedom of himself and his comrades depended upon the fate of Komárom; he, therefore, besought the governor of the fortress to hold out no longer.

We bear in mind the greatness of soul displayed by that Roman general, who having been made prisoner by the Carthaginians, was sent home with dispatches containing disgraceful conditions of peace; but who so far from supporting them, reminded his countrymen of their duty, bade them not forget their old warlike fame, and then to redeem his word, willingly went back to Carthage, although a painful death stared him in the face; and we have too great an admiration for the high-mindedness which characterised that noble citizen, not to feel

the deepest regret that an imprisoned Hungarian should have written the letter above mentioned, more especially as in personal courage and boldness of heart few could equal him, certainly none surpassed him.

But the same injurious delusion found favour even with those who being in full enjoyment of both physical and moral freedom, were so much the less to be excused. In order to rescue Kiss, Batthyányi, and the other martyrs from prison, one thing alone was necessary:—To abide by the first treaty of capitulation, which among other things, demanded a *general amnesty*.

In order to consult upon the state of affairs, the governor of the fortress called a council of war, not as before composed of the commanders of corps and divisions, with the chief of engineers and artillery, who were fully determined to maintain the first treaty; but a new one, to which all the staff-officers, and two officers from each battalion were admitted. By their help, Klapka and his partisans succeeded in annulling the former solemn resolution. It was decided, in accordance with the wish of General Nugent, to

divide the capitulation into two parts: those points which referred to the general welfare of the nation were to be discussed by letter with the Emperor of Austria, while a commission was to be chosen for the purpose of negociating those points which referred to Komárom in particular.

The venerable Government Commissioner Ujházy protested in simple but energetic words against any alteration of the terms. After him I spoke, and attacked the specious reasoning of Klapka: "The fortress," I said, "could be held for a year, even without being driven to such extremities as Massena once was: our persistence must compel the enemy to yield—and to think merely of ourselves while we forgot our bleeding country, whose last hopes were placed in us, was nothing short of barefaced selfishness and neglect of duty." I further reminded them that by virtue of a resolution solemnly passed in the previous council, "any one who proposed altering the conditions was declared a traitor," etc. The truth of my remarks was undeniable, and they were obliged to have recourse to other means of opposition:—"The Lieutenant-

Colonel is put under arrest until further orders," was the answer of the presiding general. Thus the disagreeable antagonist was effectually set aside. To punish a member of a council of war for freely expressing his opinion is an unexampled misuse of power. But however arbitary Klapka's conduct was, the silence of the other members was equally astonishing, for they allowed the right of free discussion to be violated in my person.

A short time previously, Klapka had imprisoned Stephen Friebeisz, the editor of the *Komárom* (government) newspaper, on account of a leading article which he had written upon the defence of the fortress.

After such proceedings, no one dared to gainsay the governor. Arbitary will rode roughshod over justice; narrow-minded and misleading expediency took the place of heroic courage and hearty valour. Enthusiasm for the fatherland was regarded as fanaticism, and a high sense of duty as insubordination.

In order to check all further opposition, a military police was organised under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Bangya, and

the object was to disperse all groups of more than five persons in the open streets, to hinder all consultations respecting the affairs of the fortress, and particularly to see that no discussions of the kind took place in hotels or coffee houses.

Meanwhile there were chosen as commissioners for negotiation, the Colonels Kászonyi, Assermann, Szabó, Janik, Esterházy, and Otto Zichy, Lieutenant-Colonels Rutkay, Prágay, Mednyánszky, and Captains Gasparetz and Takács. The letter to the Emperor of Austria, and the altered terms of capitulation were sent to the enemy's headquarters that very day.

As the surrender of Petervárad rested on no better authority than the reports of the enemy, and as the statement might be nothing more than one of the many fictions in which the Austrians indulged, four officers were sent, by permission of General Nugent, to learn the real truth at the place itself.

The spirit of patriotic independence, driven from the open stage, took refuge in secret: for as I was under arrest during these negotiations, friends and others who shared my

opinion frequented my quarters, expressing the liveliest dissatisfaction at the conduct of Klapka and his followers. They thought, as I did, that the terms of capitulation should be maintained in their original form; but that, otherwise, the fortress should be defended to the last man. We consulted how the fatal intentions of the council might be frustrated, and resolved upon making a last attempt to recall the governor to a sense of his duty. In case this failed, we meant to put Klapka and his partisans into custody, and to deprive them of their office. A former bosom-friend of Klapka undertook to bring back the latter from the dangerous course he was pursuing; but, unhappily, without effect: there remained, therefore, no other way, than either to continue inactive spectators of events, or else to adopt forcible measures. We were not long in deciding; and, indeed, all our measures were ready.

On the 18th September, Klapka released me from arrest, and I could now operate actively; and no time was to be lost, for the negotiations were drawing to a close. My friends had secured the services of three

trusty, patriotic battalions; while I, on the other hand, had obtained information about the strength and position of the enemy.

Before I state the result of my plan, I must just notice some events which had been taking place.

On the 23rd, Colonel Hartmann, adjutant of the Emperor of Austria, and Lieutenant-Colonel Jungbauer, chief of the staff of the blockading corps, came in upon the business of the negotiation. The former had personally presented our address to His Majesty; but vague promises of grace to the whole land and to the prisoners, were the only results of our useless application. With respect to the other points of capitulation, they said that Nugent had received instructions; but that we must hardly expect to obtain a free pardon for those hussars and infantry who had previously served in the imperial army.

A council of war, held the next day, determined to stand fast by the conditions which we had sent in; and in case they were not accepted, to defend the fortress to the last man. Notice of this resolution was sent to the Austrian commander.

On the joyful supposition that the negotiations would be broken off, and that the war of freedom would be continued, the garrison welcomed this news with loudest acclamation; and a serenade given to the governor, proved their patriotic enthusiasm.

The commander-in-chief, General Haynau, had resolved to direct the blockade in person, and to undertake the task of bringing the surrender to a successful issue; and in a letter dated 26th September, 1849, he invited the governor of the fortress to a personal conference on the next day, between the hours of ten and eleven in the forenoon, leaving the choice of the place (of course, somewhere outside the fortress) to Klapka's good pleasure. Each general was to be escorted by half a squadron of cavalry. At the same time, Haynau warned us not to think of giving up the fortress to the Russians; for they would immediately hand over the garrison to the Austrian authorities, as they had done in the case of Görgey's army.

General Klapka refused to consent to a personal interview, and the council of war decided that our former conditions should

again be laid before the Austrian commander by the commissioners chosen to negotiate, and that the latter should repair to Puszta-Herkály, for that purpose, on the forenoon of the 27th.

Before this, Csorich had endeavoured to hasten the business of capitulation, by representing to Klapka, that in a few days Haynau would take the personal command of the blockade, and that it would be much more difficult to arrive at an understanding with him. And, as I am informed, Klapka replied, that he would rather be buried with the fortress, than surrender it to Haynau. Perhaps, therefore, a desire of carrying out the letter of his assertion was the reason why he declined a personal interview.

In the mean time I took measures with my friends for deposing the governor, getting the command of the fortress, and so hindering the capitulation.

We had arranged our plans for the 28th of September; but an untoward accident defeated our schemes. My friends would not be satisfied without gaining the adhesion of the cavalry. In vain I warned them not to risk

success in superfluous attempts to ensure it, and in foolish delay, when the time was come for action: in vain I told them that the brave hussars, who had fought their way at all hazards, and had come from foreign service expressly to defend their country, would be certain to be upon our side; they overruled my objections, and I was obliged to yield. I took horse, and, to avoid suspicion, I took a couple of pioneer officers, and went to inspect the fortifications, after which, I worked my way round to the camp of the Wurtemberg hussars. They received me with cheers, and asked "If the country was really lost? If they could do *nothing* for its rescue?" As I perceived from these words that I had not reckoned upon those brave men in vain, I replied, "God is good, and will not fail us;" then, as I was riding off at full gallop, the colonel of the regiment rode after me, and reproached me with exciting his troops to mutiny; and added, that the men had already been talking of cutting their way through the enemy, and marching down to the Turkish frontier. "I have not been exciting them to mutiny," replied I, "but if they are mutinous

the fault lies with those who are bent upon capitulating at all hazards, and that is what the brave warriors will not bear." With this I left him, and rode home; but he went straight to Klapka.

Scarcely had I arrived at my quarters when an adjutant of the general came to demand my sword, and a staff officer conveyed me prisoner to the inner fortress. A file of infantry was ordered to guard me, and the watch was doubled at the door of my cell, as though I had already been condemned.

I sat down, thoroughly depressed in spirits, not because my life was in danger, for I would willingly have offered it up for my country, but because my scheme for procuring at least some advantage for my native land was frustrated. But the officer upon guard aroused me from my gloomy reflections, by entering and ordering me to wait upon Klapka.

He was in Asserman's quarters, and a battalion of infantry was drawn up under arms before the house. When I came into his presence, he requested all the officers, except Asserman, to retire, and, with a stern

voice, "Friend," said he, "I deplore your fate, but it is soon decided; if you wish in any way to avert it, you must immediately discover your plans of conspiracy, and name your accomplices."

"I know of no conspiracy," I rejoined, "and have nothing to discover. I am so far from dreading your threats that I demand a court-martial." Klapka said no more, but sent me back to prison.

On the next day I appeared before a court-martial, and the hussars deposed in my favour, that I had never persuaded them to mutiny, but that they had acted merely from their own impulses; consequently the court was obliged to acquit me; in spite of which Klapka kept me in confinement until the 2nd of October. Even then it was not he who released me; for as he possessed no further power after the ill-fated capitulation, and as I had no desire of being handed over in captivity to the Austrians, I sent a subaltern officer to ask Klapka for my sword, settled my accounts with the Hungarian Major Heinrich, and left a fortress which had been surrendered to the Austrian troops.

I have long forgiven Klapka for his personal injustice to me; but will the nation forgive him for bartering the last bulwark of freedom at so worthless a price? And will Klapka stand as calmly before the judgment-seat of history as I stood before him?

At the time appointed for the interview at Puszta-Herkály, our commissioners repaired thither under an escort of hussars, and were met by Haynau, who was accompanied by his Adjutant, General Suzan, and a division of cavalry. A long discussion took place respecting the free discharge of those soldiers who had formerly been in the Austrian service, and the acceptance of Komárom paper-money; but at length all the points were arranged, subject to the approval of the governor, Klapka, and the council of war.

To say nothing of the alteration, or rather diminution of our very moderate demands, which was consented to upon that occasion, we feel it necessary to mention a circumstance, which at first sight may seem trifling, but which, in a national and military point of view, was essential. We refer to the title of the document, in which Haynau struck out

the word "Capitulation," and wrote "Submission." Thus the fortress of Komárom, with its thirty thousand defenders, which ought never to have *capitulated* at all, was obliged to hear the word *submit*.

The document ran thus:—

"SUBMISSION OF THE FORTRESS OF KOMÁROM.

"*Under the following conditions:*—

"1. Free withdrawal of the garrison, without arms; the officers to retain their swords as as their property.

Those officers who formerly served in the Austrian army shall have passports to go out of the country: those who do not wish for such passports, shall have free permission to return to their homes, *with the exception of those who voluntarily present themselves.**

The Honvéd officers, that is, those who have not previously served, shall be allowed to *reside* in their homes, without any reserve as to their future destination.

The soldiers of the former Austrian regiments are to have an amnesty: so also those indi-

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* *Mit ausnahme derjenigen die sich freiwillig stellen.* An unmeaning and intentionally ambiguous phrase. Observe, the officers are allowed to *go* home; but nothing is said of what might be done when they were there. Many of them were immediately arrested.

viduals who may have been promoted to the rank of officers are freely discharged, and will not be made the subjects of any future judicial prosecution.

"2. Passports for foreign countries shall be given to all those who claim them within thirty days.

"3. A month's pay to the officers, and ten days' pay to the soldiers of the garrison, to be paid in Austrian bank-notes, and in the ratio of pay usual in the Austrian army.

"4. To cover the liabilities of garrison, as incurred by draughts on the military chest, the Austrians will pay the sum of five hundred florins, in Austrian bank-notes.

"5. The sick and wounded in Komárom, and in the hospitals, shall be properly attended to.

"6. Private property, moveable or immoveable, shall be retained inviolable.

"7. The place, time, and manner of laying down arms, shall be hereinafter arranged.

"8. Hostilities are immediately to be suspended on both sides.

"9. The fortress will be surrendered according to the forms of war, after mutual ratification of this convention.

"*Signed, at Puszta-Herkály,*
"*27th September*, 1849,

"HAYNAU,
"*Feldzeug-meister,*
"GEORGE KLAPKA,
"*Commander of the fortress and of the troops.*

"TAKÁCS, *Captain.*
"GASPARITZ, *Captain.*
"MEDNYANSKY, *Lieut.-Colonel.*
"JOHN PRÁGAY, *Lieut.-Colonel.*
"STEPHEN RUTKAY, *Lieut.-Colonel.*
"COUNT OTTO ZICHY, *Colonel.*
"COUNT PAUL ESTERHÁZY, *Colonel.*
"JOHN JANIK, *Colonel.*
"SIGISMUND SZABÓ, *Colonel.*
"JOSEPH VON KÁSZONYI, *Colonet.*
"FRANCIS ASSERMANN, *Colonel and Commandant of the fortress.*

"*Pour copie conforme.*

"SZILLÁNYI,

"*Lieut.-Colonel, Chief of the General's Staff.*"

A clause was added, that the surrender should not take place until the return of the commissioners from Petervárad. We allowed a steamer to pass every day along the river, and stipulated that all the civil persons, such as Commissioner Repeczky and others should be invested with military brevet rank, and to come under the provisions of the capitulation. Even Ujházy himself, the plenipotentiary of the government, was not excepted; he was obliged to accept a nominal military appointment, in order to save himself from certain

death. After all, Repeczky, who remained in the country, was at a later period exposed to prosecution.

On the 30th September, ordered a religious service to be held in honour of those who had fallen in defence of freedom: it was performed on the right bank, at the star-fort, in presence of a majority of the garrison.

We cannot pass over the careless manner in which high military appointments had been given out in the later days of the siege: even after the flight and dissolution of the ministry, promotions to the rank of staff-officers went on daily. One day I myself was surprised at seeing the following decree:—

"In consideration of numerous services in the war of independence, Lieutenant-Colonel Thaly is, from the date of 16th September, raised to the rank of Colonel.

"KLAPKA,
"*General.*

"LADISLAUS UJHÁZY,
"*Government Commissioner.*"

I would not accept this promotion; though afterwards, in Schumla, when I heard from Kossuth's own lips that he, as governor, had

issued a decree to that effect in Szegédin, which was countersigned by Aulich, as minister of war, I felt myself justified in assuming the title.

Before the return of the commissioners from Petervárad (who came back on the 2nd October, and confirmed the news of that place having surrendered), Count Nobili entered Komárom to make arrangements about the manner in which we should give up the fortress. The following arrangements were agreed upon:—

"The fortress of Komárom will be surrendered on three successive days, in the following manner, viz.:—

"First day. The surrender commences on the 2nd day of October, 1849. At four o'clock P.M. on that day, the Hungarian troops will leave the entrenched camp and the *tête-de-pont*, after having first laid down their arms. The infantry are to pile arms, and to lay down their colours and accoutrements, viz., their cartridge-boxes and ammunition, great coats and knapsacks. The cavalry are to dismount, and to give up their swords and carbines. The cavalry soldiers will remain

with their horses until the same can be handed over to a detachment of Austrian cavalry.

"This done, while the Austrian troops are ranged at the distance of one thousand yards from the entrenchments, the said troops will advance and occupy the entrenched camp and the *tête-de-pont* on the Danube. The battering-guns, with their stores of ammunition and implements, will remain in the works.

"The Austrian garrison of the entrenched camp and *tête-de-pont* will, on that day, consist of—

"Infantry, nine battalions.

"Rifles, two companies.

"Cavalry, eight squadrons.

"Field-batteries, with horses, of six guns each, with ammunition-cars,—five.

"Foot-batteries, 6-pounders,—two.

"Howitzer battery, one.

"12-pounder battery, one.

"3-pounder battery, one.

"An Austrian detachment of cavalry will receive instructions to take care of the train-horses.

"The Hungarian troops which have been

ranged in the entrenched camp and in the *tête-de-pont*, will leave the *rayon* of the fortress by companies, immediately after the surrender of the arms, horses, etc.; and, after having received their pay and warrants of safe-conduct, they will immediately proceed on the roads of Igmánd and Tata, and by steam down the Danube.

"It is understood, that the officers (who take their baggage) leave the fortress with the soldiers, and that those only remain behind who have claimed passports over the Austrian frontier, and who, consequently, must apply to the new commander of the fortress for a certificate. Those among the men who desire to enlist in the Austrian service, will give notice of their intention before leaving: over and above the ten days' pay they will receive a sum of money as bounty, if it is found that they are fit and proper for service.

"Officers of the Austrian garrison will be instructed to protect and guide the Hungarian troops to their respective countries.

"For the purpose of expediting the distribution of the pay, and of the warrants of safe conduct, it is agreed that an Austrian officer

will be appointed for every two battalions, escadrons, and batteries, who will hand the warrants and papers to the respective commanders, and assist in the distribution of the same.

"The Hungarian Commander will issue instructions for the necessary calculations being made respecting the pay for the soldiers and officers; and he shall provide that the warrants are properly filled up with the names of the parties.

"The occupation of the entrenched camp, and of the *tête-de-pont* having taken place, Austrian sentinels will be posted on the right bank of the Danube, at the entrance of the two bridges. These sentinels will stop every one who is not provided with an order. The garrison will do the same on the left bank.

"Second Day.—The surrender of the old and new fortress, and of the island, takes place on the 3rd of October. These places are to be given up, with all their stores, arms, artillery, ammunition, provisions, and military establishments. Respecting the surrender of the arms, and the distribution of the pay and

the warrants, the same regulations are agreed upon which have been mentioned above.

"The garrison of the above works consists of nine battalions of foot, with artillerymen, and the soldiers who were employed in the various military establishments. In leaving the fortress, these troops will cross the lower bridge over the Danube, and proceed to the right bank of that river.

"Immediately after their departure, the Austrian troops will occupy the old and new fortress, and the island in the Danube, and sentinels will be posted on the glacis and on the bridges.

"Third Day.—The works on the Waag and Palatinal line, the Apália island, and the public offices in the city, with the stores of arms, ammunition, regimentals, provisions, and military establishments, are to be surrendered on the 4th of October.

"The garrison of the above works, consisting of nine battalions of foot, six escadrons of horse, one 6-pounder horse battery, and one 3-pounder foot battery, will lay down their arms on the Gipsey's Meadow, and leave

the fortress by the Posony Gate. They will depart for their respective homes partly by the Csalóköz island, in part by the bridge at Keszegfalva, and in part by the bridge which crosses the Danube at the Czonco.

"The troops which are in the transport-house, are to appear on the Gipsey's Meadow, and to leave the fortress on the same day.

"The sick and wounded who are in the chief hospital on the Palatinal lines, in the Convent of the Benedictines, and in the Reformed College, are to be consigned to the care of the Austrians, who will leave the medical staff of the army at Komárom.

"The Hungarian Commander will make a list of the names of the sick and wounded officers. This list is to be given to the Austrian Commissioner, Bayerfeld, to ensure to these officers the advantages of the capitulation.

"In conclusion, it has been agreed, that the officers and other functionaries, who have charge of stores of any kind, shall remain in Komárom until the due delivery of the stores has taken place.

"This agreement is to be ratified within twenty-four hours.

"Thus executed in duplicate, signed and exchanged.

"*Komárom*, 1*st October*, 1849,

"SZILÁNYI,

"Lieutenant-Colonel and Chief of the Staff of the Fortress of Komárom,

"JUNGBAUER,

"Lieutenant-Colonel and Chief of the Staff,

"COUNT NOBILI,

"Field-Marshal Lieutenant of the besieging army,

"Klapka.

"Agreed."

On the next day, 3rd October, the surrender was made. Upon this occasion, a scene took place which gave the fullest proof that the garrison was animated by patriotic feelings; that, consequently, it was false to accuse the troops of giving way to a spirit of desertion; and that there was no fear of them wishing to capitulate upon unfavourable terms. Klapka was weak enough to be persuaded, by General Nobili, to ask the 4th hussar regiment (Würtemberg), whether they would consent to enter the Austrian service again.

Deep silence followed the question; not a soldier advanced from the ranks; although many of them might, very probably, be exposed to great privations in a few weeks' time. At length an old sergeant cried out, on behalf of all his comrades, "To the Austrians we will never go over; but if our fatherland ever needs true sons, we shall be ready."

On the evening of the 4th, the fortifications were evacuated; and the three-coloured flag was taken down, to make way for the black-yellow standard.

On the morning of the 5th, almost all the divisions had left the fortress: each man received the following certificate:—

"Safe-conduct for N. N., allowing him to pass without hindrance to his home at N, in the county of N; being one of the Komárom garrison, who, in virtue of the favours accorded to the same, enjoys safety of person and property.

"B.,

"*Imperial Commissioner of the War Office.*

"*Komárom*, 1*st October*, 1849."

(Stamped with the double-headed eagle).

I shall now examine the reasons given by Klapka in his Memoirs, wherein he tries to show that the capitulation was necessary, and to a certain extent favourable.

The high importance of this closing scene, and of its immediate consequences, renders it a duty to investigate these circumstances most rigidly; and the more so, because the accounts which have already appeared fail to give a full and proper explanation. The reader will then judge whether the "mutinous conduct" of myself and my friends must be approved or condemned.

The reasons alleged by Klapka fall into two classes: Firstly, those which are grounded upon military considerations; Secondly, those which have reference to the state of politics at the time.

Among the former we find a statement of *the want of provisions*. Klapka says, p. 195, that we had—

Flour and beans for		4	months.
Meat	„	3	„
Wine	„	3	„
Oats	„	6	„
Hay and straw	„	2	„

with salt in abundance; but not more than 1,000 cwt. of powder, and 1,000 cwt. of saltpetre. It is true that we had flour for only four months; but Klapka should not have failed to add, that we had a very large supply of corn, and eighty water-mills, besides a steam-mill, at our disposal. But he who has corn and mills, need not complain of wanting flour. It can be proved that at the capitulation, besides the supply of flour, there were one hundred and sixty thousand pecks (*metzen*), of wheat already purchased for the garrison, and more than two hundred thousand pecks stored up by private persons in the town.

The quantity of meat and wine is correctly stated: not so that of the oats, for they were in such plenty that even if we had been obliged to substitute double feeds of corn for want of hay, we could have gone on doing so for a year. The number of horses, including those of the artillery, was above three thousand; we had two hundred thousand pecks of oats, the property of the fortress, and private persons may have possessed a like amount. Besides there were in store fifty thousand pecks of barley which might

have been used in case of need. But all these supplies had been amply increased by the booty which we made upon the 3rd of August, when we laid hands upon provisions destined for the enemy, namely, two thousand eight hundred oxen, one thousand swine, twelve or thirteen ship-loads of all manner of grain, as well as their reserve ammunition. After the same victory we seized wine in the cellars of Almás and Neszmély, and even without that we might have made beer, as we had barley and breweries in abundance. If no other drink had been at hand, the Danube was never dry, and soldiers worthy of the name could have denied themselves wine for the sake of the cause which they defended.

Supposing that there were only a thousand weight of powder, and not reckoning the reserve ammunition obtained after 3rd August, still from the thousand weight of saltpetre we might have made another thousand two hundred and fifty pounds weight of powder; this would have lasted for eight or nine months, if not for a year with proper management.

I shall presently submit to the better

judgment of my readers, several considerations which will show the importance attaching to a longer defence of the fortress.

Further, Klapka urges the want of money, of clothing, and the progress of disease in the garrison.

During the whole siege we never had much money, and it is true that in the absence of current coin or small notes, every thing was necessarily at a high price. But is that not more or less the fate of every besieged fortress? Moreover, Klapka himself must allow that we were never so rich as under his command, for at the time of the capitulation we had an open credit of 4,360,000 florins C.M.; and in case the siege had been prolonged, the Government would have empowered Commissioner Ujházy to issue five million florins in bank notes. Klapka mistakes in stating (p. 281), that up to the capitulation, notes to the value of 900,000 florins had been manufactured; only 740,000 florins had been made, and no more than 640,000 florins had been issued.

The clothing of the troops was bad, but the booty made after the 3rd August remedied

this evil to some extent. At all events, we were far better off than the army during its winter campaign, and troops quartered in a fortress might be expected to defy cold. The sick numbered three thousand, but Klapka would have done well to explain this more clearly, for the greater part of them were not labouring under ordinary diseases, but were persons wounded in many engagements which Görgey had fought. The normal condition of the garrison was better than formerly, or at least no worse.

And whereas Klapka asserts (p. 258) that the fortress was completely invested on the 5th of September; the real fact is, that there were then no more than from forty to forty-five thousand Austrian and Russian troops about Komárom. These forces might have been enough to surround the fortress upon the right bank of the Danube, but were far too few to surround it entirely. The enemy would have been obliged to extend his lines for eight or ten geographical miles, and in five separate *rayons*, on account of the various rivers which meet at Komárom; so that, in case of a vigorous attack, one division could

not easily have come to aid another. And if the governor had been equal to his duty, if he had been determined upon exacting justice from the enemy, in a word, if he had resolved upon energetic action, he would have found, in the number of the besiegers no insurmountable difficulties.

Another motive is found by Klapka, in the spirit of desertion, which, he says, was manifested by the troops. Who can dare to cast such an imputation upon men, who, with the exception of the Bacskay regiment, refused to accept the governor's permission to return home, but were, on the contrary, resolved to fight for independence, and stand by the fortress to the last? Do not facts bespeak the good feeling of the garrison? For when, upon one occasion the governor had refused some proposals of the enemy, with a remark that he would defend the place to the last man, did not the troops express their satisfaction by giving a triumphant serenade to their commander? Was that a mark of coldness in the cause, when, after the surrender, not a man was willing to enter the Austrian service, even when asked to do so by Klapka himself?

If, indeed, any were ready to desert, the reasons must be looked for in the desperate conviction which prevailed, that the council of war had resolved to capitulate at all hazards; for then the common men could not understand why their presence was any longer necessary. The charge of desertion, (which, however, I do not wish to palliate) was to be imputed to the commanders rather than to the men. Besides, effectual means are always at hand to prevent such a spirit from spreading: a few summary executions are quite enough, as was seen in the case of the Bacskay hussars.

And here it is proper to say a word upon the affair of those hussars. General Klapka had published an order that those who did not feel resolute enough to abide the extremities of the siege, should apply for their discharge within forty-eight hours. Only a single officer made such an application; but the Bacskay cavalry desired their discharge, as they had only engaged for one year, and the time was within ten days of expiring. In spite, however, of the published order, their request was absolutely refused: such, at least,

was the account which I heard during my confinement. One of the squadrons then committed an act of insubordination, in marching, without orders, to the residence of the governor; but Klapka himself had, to a certain extent, encouraged it by his proclamation. He ought to have respected his own act; but he decimated the squadron, and his conduct cannot possibly be justified. But an additional reason for capitulating is put forward, by saying that the garrison was dispirited because no news came from Kossuth. Had Klapka held the fortress but two days longer, he would have received a message from Kossuth, warning him not to surrender the fortress on any terms. But as the messengers came in, the garrison was marching out, and the enemy was planting his standard upon the ramparts. He did not even wait the return of that messenger whom Ujházy, with his consent, had dispatched to Kossuth. It was not the delay of the latter, or of the messengers, but the excessive haste of Klapka that was to blame.

Considerations of a political nature afford still less justification of his proceedings.

He confesses that constant promises of gracious pardon, of complete reconciliation, of amnesty, of pacification for the country, and so on, had great weight with him. But if the credulity of the Hungarian ministry at the beginning of the war, before Austria had thrown off the mark, was not to be justified, how much less can the simplicity of Klapka be excused, who had witnessed and felt the treachery of the enemy during the most bloody civil war of which he was an eye-witness. The general forgot the history of the last three hundred years, and failed to profit by the lessons of the current year, and of the last few weeks.

And this credulity is so much the less to be pardoned, as Klapka was not content with mere promises in the case of *his own person* and of the garrison. As then he demanded a written guarantee for himself and his troops, he ought to have demanded a similar security for *the prisoners, and for the future well-being of the country*. The objection that according to the rules of war, the capitulation could not benefit any but the actual garrison, was nothing but Austrian special pleading, and

was purely ridiculous. The example of Venice was before his eyes. There, with a feeble garrison and scanty provisions, the defenceless held out till they secured the lives of all the friends of freedom, and half the value of their assignats. So much the more might Komárom with its numerous troops and abundant provisions, have saved from death those brave men who were delivered over to the hangman immediately after the surrender of the fortress; and have rescued at least a part of the paper money, by the loss of which many of the poor people were absolutely ruined.

A fortress is not the property of the garrison, but belongs to the whole nation, for whose defence it was erected. It was with the design of obtaining great advantages from the possession of such a stronghold, that so strong a force had been thrown into the place, and that so many troops had been drafted from the main body of the army. It was, therefore, extremely short-sighted and narrow-minded to enter into a capitulation which only regarded the interests of the garrison.

But we are further told, that it was desirable to save the surrounding neighbourhood from

devastation, and the lives of the garrison from needless destruction. That is to say, the *momentary* interests of a part were to be considered in preference to the *lasting* interests of the *whole* country. And how far the safety of the garrison was secured we shall see presently.

The first article of the "Submission" said, "that the garrison should freely depart without weapons, the officers keeping their swords as their property;" whereas, the corresponding point in the original treaty proposed was, "departure with military honours." The victors of the 3rd August were obliged to skulk out like prisoners without their arms; and the officers might not wear their swords at their sides, but smuggled them through among the baggage.

But this was nothing: for the Austrians interpreted the article as merely guaranteeing *free discharge and return home*, when there the men were forcibly compelled to enter Imperial regiments, in defiance of the express promise "that no further judicial penalties should ensue." Hence, owing to the thoughtless credulity of their general, the men of the

garrison were enrolled and brought under the rod of Austrian corporals, just as those who had made an unconditional surrender with Görgey.

The second article said:—"Passports for foreign countries shall be given to those who claim them within thirty days."

How shamefully this point was executed by the Imperial commander-in-chief, Klapka's own experience showed. His own passport, which was drawn up for America, compelled instant and continued travelling, with all the countries marked, and "without return." This refined malignity was due to the acuteness of the Austrian police, but the right of choosing our place of residence was to a certain extent forfeited by Klapka's own mismanagement.

On the 30th September, before the evacuation of Komárom, all those who intended to go abroad, attended a meeting in the county hall. The particulars have been since communicated to me by M. Rózsafi, an editor of the *Komáromi Értesitö*, who was at the meeting.

Commissioner Ujházy presided. Most of

those present, above five hundred in number, wished to go to Turkey. But Klapka remarked that the independent Honvéds would find their principles of freedom violated if they were to live in a country where the rudest despotism prevailed, and in which there was safety neither for person nor property; and that only those wished to repair thither, who like drowning men catching at straws, wished to be ready in case a new revolution should break out. Besides, he added, "I do not think the Austrians will give passes for Turkey."

Captain Thomas Paloczy expressed his astonishment that Turkey should form an exception, since the article in the capitulation was general, and did not specify any particular countries. "Yes," says Klapka, "the article says passports in general, but as the phrase is rather ambiguous, I will ask the Austrian commander's opinion, but I do not think he will give passports for Turkey." Thus Klapka hardly knew the price at which he was bartering Komárom. However, his supposition in this instance was correct; Turkey was interdicted. But still the fortress

was in our hands, even then we could have drawn back from an agreement which the enemy was beginning to break; but—we submitted.

In the fourth article, the enemy offered 500,000 florins in Austrian bank-notes, to take liabilities which amounted to at least 740,000. The difference was lost by the townspeople who held our paper money. The blow fell with particular heaviness upon those who had partly executed large contracts, for which they had not been paid, for the capitulation provided for them no indemnification whatsoever. Still more, no provision was made for the lives of the patriotic townspeople, who had over and over again rescued the fortress. Not a word was said about them; no amnesty secured them against the vengeance of a bloodthirsty foe, and yet they had suffered, both in person and property, for more than a year.

The candid judgment of my readers will decide whether the terms of capitulation were such as should have been demanded for a fortress like Komárom. I am confident that every man will give a negative answer, and I beg it to be remembered that the original

conditions resolved upon, on 1st September, demanded both a general amnesty for the nation, and the recognition of paper money, nominally amounting to about 60 milions of florins. Sooner or later the Austrians would have been obliged to accept these terms.

Our reasons for this opinion are found both in the internal condition and foreign relations of the Austrian monarchy. For passive approbation of Russian intervention, we did set a great value upon the notes sent from the English Foreign-office on 28th August, and 11th and 29th September, and although we do not believe that any active measures would have been taken against the Russians, notwithstanding the strong feeling manifested by the English people after the surrender at Világos, yet considering the critical position of Austria with regard to the refugees, we are convinced that she would have given any reasonable price for quiet possession of the strongest fortress upon the Danube.

The possibility of an Austro-Russian war with the Ottoman Porte and England, was at one time not very remote. As long, then, as

Komárom stood, the Austrians could not call the country their own, nor could they draw full advantage from its submission. For 60,000 or 80,000 men would have been obliged to remain there, for the sake of holding 30,000 in check; and if hostilities again broke out on the lower Danube, then the whole population would have risen afresh.

And even if the refugee question had been settled, still the internal affairs of the Austrian monarchy would have disposed them to treat on moderate terms. For as the revolution had been put down in all parts of the country, there could be no more excuse for retaining the services of Russian troops, without a most shameful confession of weakness: and, in fact, whether in consequence of the conference at Warsaw, or whatever the cause may have been, the Russian army left the country after the surrender of Világos. Even Grabbe, who was marching upon Komárom, received orders to retire; for the Austrians were jealous that Russians should gain all the honours, and leave them nothing whatever to boast of.

But if Austria was reduced to depend upon its own forces, the Emperor would barely have

troops enough to keep Italy and Hungary in subjection, without thinking of ordering Italians or Honvéds to come and besiege a Hungarian fortress. The only trustworthy forces were Gallicians, Bohemians, Croats, and Germans. To bring 80 or 100,000 of these together about Komárom, after providing for the safety of other parts of the monarchy, was not a task so easy as that of gaining the fortress by fair means.

Besides the expense of concentrating those forces, the prospect of a tedious siege with probable loss of 20 or 30,000 men, and certain destruction of the fortifications, and above all the miserably low state of Austrian finances, all tended to make the enemy cautious how they rejected offers of capitulation.

Finally, Komárom prevented Dr. Bach from beginning his vile work of "organisation," and hindered the traffic along the Danube between Vienna and Pesth, the importance of which was seen from the fact that the enemy took advantage of the armistice in September, to stipulate at once for free passage along the river.

These many reasons, which were almost as many vital questions, rendered a speedy and

peaceful possession of Komáron all-important. I do not mean to say, that by holding out we could have saved the Hungarian constitution, for that the Austrians were determined all along to destroy: but I am fully persuaded that the Cabinet would have granted a general amnesty, and a recognition of the paper-money: for those points did not affect Austria's hatred of constitutional principles. Nay, the Cabinet of Vienna would have accepted all the terms of capitulation proposed on 1st September.

The conditions of Klapka's modified capitulation would have been granted, even after a breach had been effected in the walls. For in case a fortress is about to be stormed, or if provisions are exhausted, a garrison of 30,000 men can always threaten to cut their way through the enemy, after having blown up the fortifications. And to say nothing of Komárom's importance in a strategic point of view, the works alone were valued at fifty or sixty million florins, and might be regarded in our calculation as a set-off against the paper money.

I have not insisted upon the fact, that according to the laws of war, no fortress should

think of surrendering until a breach has been effected in the walls; because the peculiar circumstances in which Komárom was placed, and the importance of this last bulwark, had made it necessary to dwell upon higher considerations.

If a European war had broken out upon the refugee question, Komárom would have been the supporting point of a new rising. But, independently of that, the defender of Komárom ought to have considered himself the representative of a whole nation, and the last guardian of its rights. To this height Klapka could not rise. Unhappily, I and my friends were not permitted to accomplish that which his want of moral courage failed to effect.

Klapka has talent, education, a soldier's courage, and goodwill: but decision, perseverance, moral courage, and firmness are not numbered among his qualities: the surrender of Komárom was a fearful catastrophe for Hungary, but to Klapka a subject of bitter reproach, and a source of cruel remorse.

The "submission" document was hardly dry, and the promises of gracious pardon were still hovering on Haynau's lips, when that

worthy representative of Austria's youthful monarch signed the bloody condemnations which were executed upon the 6th October in Arad and Pesth. One of the victims at Arad was the same Ernest Kiss, who had thought that the liberation of himself and his comrades depended upon the surrender of the fortress.

Overwhelmed by Russian force, and betrayed by Görgey, Hungarian freedom was made the prey of that Austria which we in the first instance had conquered.

A noble people, robbed of its thousand-year-old constitution and of its inalienable rights, was now disarmed, fettered, and laid helpless at the feet of blood-thirsty tyrants. But with a consciousness of undeserved misfortune, and unshaken confidence in God's justice, my beloved country bears herself with dignity, and even in bondage wears her chains without crouching. Fate has broken the power of her heroes: but her courage and love of freedom bid defiance to misfortune and to time itself.

The hour of redemption will one day sound; the time of deliverance may be put off, but can never be put out of existence: it must

come, and we hope that it is not far distant. We hope, too, that Western Europe will better understand its interest, as well as its duty. With Poland and Hungary, two pillars of freedom have been allowed to fall. As Louis XIV. once boasted, "The Pyrenees exist no longer"; so Nicolas can say, "There are no longer any Carpathians." Before the Russian intervention in Hungary, the Muscovite empire was bounded by the Pruth; now it stretches to the Rhine and the Elbe. Another step, and freedom is gone. But let Hungary and Poland uprise again, and the safety of the West is made sure.

THE BIOGRAPHY

OF

GENERAL MORITZ PERCZEL,

AS

A POLITICIAN AND A SOLDIER;

DRAWN FROM AUTHENTIC SOURCES.

By COLONEL SIGISMUND THALY.

MORITZ PERCZEL.

AMONG those whose names are associated with the recent history of Hungary, and who have been distinguished either for their personal character or their extraordinary deeds, few have awakened a livelier interest than Moritz Perczel. For both in the sphere of political activity and upon the battle-field, he has displayed abilities of no common order. Whether we behold him as a youth enthusiastically fired with a love of freedom, as a restless political partisan, or afterwards as a representative of the people, who assuming a military capacity drew his sword upon the right side, and became an independent leader of armies, we are filled with admiration of

his bold decision and his able conduct. And while the historian will dwell with pleasure upon his career as a politican and a general, the mind of the psychologist may examine with delight the individual peculiarities which marked his character.

His natural abilities, which more or less bore the stamp of genius, had been improved by study, and developed by an early entrance into public life; but his leading characteristics were a burning love of freedom and independence, joined to a temperament naturally passionate. His restless spirit ever urged him forward to the accomplishment of his plans; and as his convictions at once became "blood and marrow" with him, part and parcel of his own ardent disposition, no sooner had he conceived an idea than he sought to work it out, and strove to realise it. Here lies at once his strength and his weakness. To the determined feelings and rapid movements of his mind, many very brilliant actions which he performed as a statesman or as a soldier, are to be ascribed; sometimes, however, the same peculiarities hurried him into fatal errors,

which a more cautious temper would have avoided.

These points will appear more clearly in the sequel: and if our readers will bear in mind these two prominent qualities which distinguished the General, namely, patriotism and impetuosity, they will be able to appreciate his mode of action, and to pronounce a verdict upon our own opinion of his merits.

Moritz Perczel was born at Bonyhád, in the Tolna county, on the 15th October, 1811. His father, Alexander Perczel, a wealthy country nobleman, had always gained the universal respect and love of those under his authority, by a display of patriarchal virtues, and noble, though aristocratic, sentiments; he was a chivalrous supporter of the dynasty, for which he had borne arms, and consequently this meritorious nobleman stood deservedly high in the consideration of the government.

The family of Perczel is descended from an English family named "Purcell," some members of which, hard pressed by religious persecution, emigrated, and followed the Archduke Matthias first of all to the

Netherlands and then to Austria, where they were created knights of the Holy Roman Empire, by the Emperor Rudolph. They then emigrated to Hungary, where also they were raised to the rank of nobles.

Moritz received his earliest education under the eyes of his parents from Michael Vörösmarty (the well-known Hungarian bard), a strictly moral preceptor and liberal-minded man, who early ingrafted sound principles upon the lively mind of his pupil. Under such guidance, the talented boy made rapid progress in scientific knowledge, and the mature development of his powers gave the best promise of future success.

He was then sent to the University of Pesth, where he devoted himself zealously to philosophy and the mathematics, having hitherto been entirely devoted to study without finding any field for action. But the fuel was there, and needed only a spark to kindle it. So early as 1825, there were in Hungary hints and traces of the movement which was beginning to agitate Poland, and which five years later broke out into open rebellion in that country. The beardless boy,

then fourteen years old, took part in these early movements, which however remained unknown for a time, and did not involve the youth in any immediate trouble.

Disappointed in these aspirations for the deliverance of Poland; he quickly sought and found another object of less extensive or exciting interest, but to which he was drawn by the highest and most praiseworthy motives. The love of country is under all circumstances a bond of union between men of right feeling, and at this moment the duty and necessity of fostering Hungarian nationality was a common watchword among the leading spirits of the Magyar people. Then began the great struggle for independent nationality and practical reform in opposition to the Austrian cabinet. The transactions of the Diet were not without an echo in the country, and the youths in particular were ardent to maintain the precious rights of the nation. Thus we find that Perczel, in conjunction with many of his fellow-students, formed a literary society for perfecting themselves in their mother tongue, and disseminating works written in the Magyar language. For up to

this period the literary men of Hungary were more accustomed to write Latin than to compose in their native language, and were in this respect pretty much in the same position as the learned English and French during the early part of the sixteenth century. Perczel translated the Ontology of Professor Imre from Latin into Magyar, and was the first man in the University who *responded* in the Hungarian tongue. The Rector of the University, being indirectly dependent upon the government at Vienna, which was inimical to freedom and nationality, scented political tendencies in the designs of this society, and expelled Perczel, together with many other students, from the school.

Thus he was prevented from finishing his course of study, and entered the army as a cadet in the 5th Austrian artillery regiment, which was quartered at Pesth, and soon attracted the attention of his superiors. General Radetsky in particular showed considerable partiality for him; and the commandant, who was a great friend of his father's, frequently invited him to his table, and showed him other marks of distinction,

prophesying a brilliant military career for the young officer.

He remained three years with his regiment, but at length becoming weary of the pedantic military system of Austria, he quitted the service and returned to his father's house.

At home he continued his military studies, translating or composing various treatise, upon fortification and artillery for the use of a Hungarian military academy which had been established by law, although Austrian intrigues prevented that law from being carried out. For one of these treatises, the Hungarian Scientific Society sent him a letter of approbation.

In April 1831, the news of the Polish revolution aroused lively expectations throughout Europe, and Perczel, then nineteen years of age, leaving his father's house without imparting his design to any one, determined to strike a blow for right and freedom, and recognised in the heroic struggle of the Polish nation an opportunity of action worthy of his efforts. Five years before, his soul had cherished the idea of helping to regenerate that noble people, and now when he saw the probability of realising his hopes, he could not

remain an idle spectator. He hurried at once from Bonyhád to Pesth, where he renewed the acquaintance with his former comrades of the fifth artillery regiment, and had already gained over two hundred of them, but just when they were on the point of setting off all together for Poland, one of their comrades betrayed the scheme. By order of the colonel of the regiment, Perczel was apprehended, imprisoned in the garrison, tried by court-martial, and condemned to death. But the civil authorities of the Pesth country took the matter up very warmly, and strongly protested against the military usurping power over the persons of civilians. This interference was so powerful that Perczel was handed over to the ordinary courts of justice in the country, and shortly afterwards acquitted of all charge. The judges were influenced in their verdict by the deep sympathy which was then generally felt in Hungary for the Polish cause.

Shortly after this affair, which excited considerable sensation, Perczel returned home; and as his noble birth gave the right of active participation in public affairs, he accepted a civil employment in the Tolna county; here

he devoted himself to politics with great industry, and found in the county assemblies, an admirable training for future parliamentary duties; since the questions which come before the meetings of the county legislature in Hungary are the same in nature with those which come before the Diet, the only difference being that the deliberations of the latter refer generally to the whole country.

Besides the natural gifts already alluded to, Perczel possessed a distinguished talent for public speaking, which commanded admiration, especially as it was backed by steadfast principles and persevering constancy; for, from the commencement of his political career, he dedicated all his powers to the cause of freedom, and ever remained true to his colors. Shortly after his entrance into the county legislature, he became an active leader of the opposition, and took a prominent part in the election of officials, deputies, etc.

His energy and personal sacrifices, which were sometimes greater than his means warranted, often decided the victory of the liberal party: and particularly in the years 1839-40, when political agitation assumed an

increasingly serious aspect, he maintained with firmness a long and wearisome party fight, which from its obstinacy and duration, almost deserved the name of a revolution, for, in fact the Government was obliged to use force of arms in suppressing it. Upon this occasion, Moritz Perczel and his brothers, Alexander and Nicolas, were publicly put upon their trial: but the examination, even as officially conducted, brought out the injustice of the opposite party in so glaring a manner, that the Government was obliged to confess the weakness of the charge, and a royal decree suspended and hushed up the proceedings.

For all this, Perczel went on vigorously with county business, and he took as much interest in social progress, as in politics. His exertions in the Tolna and Baranya counties laid the foundation of literary societies, infant schools, reading rooms, and other institutions of a similar character; and besides that, he established a company for breeding and rearing silk worms. At Senard he founded a lunatic asylum, at Bonyhád a Jewish school and a reading room.

But political considerations were necessarily

paramount; the taxation which pressed heavily upon Hungary, and the system pursued by our cruel step-mother, Austria (*injusta noverca*), tended to degrade the land into the position of a dependent colony: complaints had been made, and had died away without procuring redress: hence, the mind of a free people was strongly impelled to help themselves, and to seek for self-government. The first idea which arose in the minds of those patriots who were desirous of asserting their rights, was that of a protective union against foreign products; with a view of encouraging home industry, instead of being obliged to purchase from the all-monopolising Austrian dominions: and in the year 1842, before the idea had been fully realised throughout the country, Kossuth, Perczel, and others, had already formed partial unions, the members of which bound themselves to make use of the articles of native manufacture.

In the following year, Perczel was elected by the liberal party of the Tolna county, as their representative in the Diet, where, with a few who shared his views, he formed a member of the Extreme Left, inimical equally to the

conservative Government party, and to the lukewarm proceedings of the liberal opposition.

He combated both vigorously, and was exposed to repeated attacks from all sides; yet, by the bold position which he assumed, and by his thorough consistency, he gained the respect even of his adversaries. The Government itself heard him with attention, and the Arch-duke Joseph, the Prince Palatine and President of the Diet, had frequent consultation with the representative of the most advanced party in the Chamber of Deputies; while all admired the eloquence of Perczel, and the register of debates contains numerous records of his oratical powers.

The line of policy which he defended was as follows; the restoration of municipal suffrage: reorganisation of the county constitutions: above all, the preservation of municipal liberty: complete religious freedom: the use of the Hungarian language in diplomatic negotiations, instead of the German and Latin, yet with due respect to Croatian nationality: these, and similar questions were strenuously maintained by the opposition, and by its free-thinking leader.

The uprightness and zeal with which he had contended for the interests of the towns, excited a general feeling of gratitude, and when the Diet in which he sat was dissolved, many of the boroughs gave him the rights of citizenship in their municipalities: among others Fehérvár, Komárom, and Szegedin sent him honorary titles of civic distinction, with a graceful acknowledgment of his patriotic exertions.

During the sessions of the same Diet, the opposition determined to give the greatest possible extension to the working of the Industry-Union. Instead of scattered and disunited provincial efforts, it was resolved to organise a general unison for the protection of native industry. Perczel and Kossuth worked together in strict union, and with surprising success. Count Casimir Batthyány was chosen president, but Kossuth was the soul of all the undertakings for reform, and acted as Director of the National Industry Protective Association, which transferred the scene of its operations to the capital (Pesth), where it carried on the work commenced at Posony, and soon earned the approbation of a large majority of the nation.

Branch societies were established in every county, and in every large town, and constant communication was kept up with the Central Board. But on the other hand, the Government was alarmed by the gigantic progress made in this direction, and began to suspect that apart from the industrial view of the question, the national party were entertaining political projects; hence, the reigning dynasty saw the necessity of concentrating all conservative elements, so as to organise a force in its own favour. A manifesto, of a low servile character, and completely hostile to the best interests of the nation, announced the establishment of this aristocratic party. In consequence of this, the opposition could no longer stand idle, but was obliged to rally all its members in order to counteract the close compact made among their antagonists: they also organised themselves afresh, and published a liberal programme, embodying the most important questions of Reform. Everything now depended upon the victory of the liberals in the counties, for on that the majority in the Diet also depended. It was a hard struggle, but the preponderance, though small, was in

favor of the liberals, and Perczel contributed essentially to this happy result: for, by his incessant agitation he turned the scale in the counties of Tolna, Baránya, Fehérvár, Komárom, and Pesth, and dictated the instructions which were given to the representatives of those districts. He had no sooner assisted in procuring victory for this party in one election, than he hurried to the meetings in a second and third county, to place his oratorical powers at the service of the constitutionalists, and his fiery appeals to patriotism and duty decided the fortune of the day.

By the intrigues of his adversaries he was not elected for the Diet which sat 1847—1848; nevertheless, he never lost sight of the main thing, but worked unceasingly upon the parliamentary party, and insisted upon the maintenance of the instructions already given.

While this contest was going on against the aristocratic faction, the revolution broke out in Paris, Feb. 24th, 1848, and a few days afterwards the rising in Vienna took place. The conservatives fell powerless to the ground, and the popular leaders stood at the helm of

state affairs. And however energetic, or even violent the man of the people had been hitherto, he now displayed remarkable moderation since victory had decided in favor of his party, or rather, since the nation had obtained its rights. In April, Perczel was appointed chief of police, in which capacity he exhibited no less circumspection than activity. Thus he solved the difficult problem, how in times of agitation order may be steadily upheld in a state, without any detriment to personal freedom. True enough, his task was rendered more easy by the sound patriotism, and good sense of the people, who, being full of confidence in the existing government, manifested a tranquil and dignified behaviour; but the prudent and moderate conduct of the chief of police deserves equal praise.

In order to meet the dangers threatened by insurrectionary movements among the Servians and in Croatia, the Hungarian ministry summoned an extraordinary Diet to assemble at Pesth in the beginning of July, 1848. Perczel was elected both by his native town and by Buda, but chose to sit for the latter place. Up to this time he had been on good terms with

the ministry; but now their short-sighted policy was not equal to the urgency of affairs, and they proposed to send an address to the king, in which they would promise to help the Imperial government in putting down the Italian insurrection, provided always that a constitution should be granted conformably to the wishes of the Italian people; while the king was expected on his part to help in putting down all risings among the Servians and Croats. Perczel denounced the whole transaction, and was supported by a small but resolute minority, which stoutly opposed the ministry: however the address was voted, and consequently he sent in his resignation as chief of police.

Upon one occasion, from his place in Parliament, he brought a charge of treason against the Austrian generals, who had been imprudently entrusted with the command of the troops against the Servians; the blinded partizans of the Government loaded him with invectives, and he certainly replied in unparliamentary language; we cannot justify his manner of answering opponents in this instance, much as we approve the courage which

led him to give utterance to his convictions; but be that as it may, a certain Count Choteck demanded personal satisfaction for those remarks, which was given, and Perczel sustained a slight wound; though soon afterwards the charges which he had made were fully borne out: for not only did General Bechthold go over to the enemy, but even that very Count who had sent the challenge did the same.

Events went on with gigantic strides. In September, Austria dropped the mask and revealed its true intentions, for now Jellachich broke with forty thousand Croats into Hungary, and drove all before him as far as the Balaton Lake, so that the forebodings of the opposition party were too soon found true, and the undecided conduct of the ministry was bringing ruin upon the luckless nation. But that ministry, being divided against itself, fell to the ground, and while the Imperial government was trying to patch up another, Kossuth accepted the presidency of the National Defence Committee, which the parliament had offered to him. That remarkable man soon infused a new spirit into the patriotic party, and bade them hold up their heads as

citizens; so that those who but lately had been hooted as ambitious agitators by the ministerialists, were now found lending their support to the government, when they saw that the authorities were taking measures which were for the real good of the country. Within four days, Perczel organised a battalion, took the command of it, and was also appointed Government Commissioner with extended powers; and when he joined the army he found that they had retired without striking a blow from the river Drava to Fehérvár. In a council of war held at Sukoyö on 28th September, he strongly advised that they should not retreat any further without fighting, and he induced General Moga to hazard a battle, which was fought at Pakózd on the 29th, with fourteen thousand Hungarians, mostly recruits, against thirty-two thousand combined Croats and Austrians; yet the latter were defeated with loss. The battalion of volunteers from Tolna, under the brothers Alexander and Nicolas Perczel, decided the fortune of the day, as General Moga testified in a note written upon the field of battle to Moritz Perczel, who commanded the reserve.

After this engagement, the main body pursued Jellachich, who was in hasty flight, and who could expect little quarter, as he had broken a truce agreed upon; meanwhile Moritz Perczel was detached with four thousand recruits, and a few thousand of national guards, very poorly armed, to go against the hostile reserve corp, nine thousand strong, which was advancing under Generals Roth and Philipowich. He came up with the Croatian hordes at Ozora, and being gallantly supported by the people of the neighbourhood, he forced them to lay down their arms; nine thousand prisoners, twelve cannons, and eight standards, were the fruits of this four days' campaign.

At this time Görgey was acting as a major under Perczel's command, and was arrested for breach of discipline; the latter intended to bring him before a court-martial, but he begged himself off, and alleged various excuses to justify himself: Perczel forgave his fault, but ordered him to leave his corps. But Görgey never forgot that humiliation, and followed Perczel with undying hatred to the end of the war.

When news came that the Croatian reserve was captured, the House of Representatives voted thanks to the energetic and successful leader who had obtained that result. He continued his operations and marched against the Austrian Generals Nugent and Dahlen, driving them across the Mura, and forcing a passage across the river at Letenye and Kotori, in spite of a superior force of Croats and Austrians. In this battle the enemy lost twelve thousand men, killed and wounded, and sixteen thousand men taken prisoners, besides three pieces of artillery and three standards. After this affair, Perczel retired behind the Mura, but a few days afterwards crossed the river again, and drove Nugent once more from Hungarian soil.

These exploits, carried out successfully with so small a force and with such electrical rapidity earned for Perczel the rank of General, and completely justified his appointment.

In November of the same year he broke into Styria, and defeated the Austrians at Friedau.

But an order from the Government directed the general to leave that part of the country, to attack Györ, and effect a junction with Görgey, who had been appointed to command the army of the Upper Danube, and who was now retiring before Windischgrätz towards Györ. After the disadvantageous battles at Parendorf and Bábolna, where the enemy was pressing hard upon his rear, Görgey made forced marches to Bicske. Meanwhile Perczel advanced to Mór, where he received instructions from the government to engage the enemy, and to check their advance: similar instructions had been forwarded to Görgey, and so Perczel, trusting to the co-operation of the army of the Upper Danube, took up a good position, and awaited the attack of the Austrians, who began the charge at eight o'clock on the morning of the 30th September, with an overwhelming superiority in point of numbers, having 26,000 men against 5,000 Hungarians. Disproportionate as these contending forces were, our men retained their position until two o'clock: but as Görgey neglected his instructions, and perfidiously retreated without striking a blow, Perczel's

army was broken through by the Austrian cavalry, which alone was as strong as all the troops he had put together, and with a loss of 600 men and three guns he was obliged to retire. The general had hitherto been accustomed to victorious marches, and was doubly pained by the misfortune of that day, and all the more so because the public knew nothing of those orders which had been sent down from head quarters, and ascribed all the blame to him. However, two months afterwards, in the Chamber of Representatives, he was able to justify his conduct, and to clear up the suspicious doubts which had been hanging upon his military abilities ever since that affair.

After the battle of Mór he retired towards Pesth, covering Görgey's retreat; he held a consultation with the latter, and left the capital on the 5th January, in order to lead his troops across the Theis. The Austrians followed close upon his line of march, but he managed to reorganise his army and to increase it with additional troops of various kinds, so that it now amounted to 17,000 men.

Whilst many were discouraged, and even disposed to desert, Perczel remained unshaken,

in spite of the defeat which he had sustained; he lost neither courage nor composure, and inspired his dispirited troops with confidence. Thus, within three weeks after the battle of Mór, when all supposed that he was lost, he began to act on the offensive. His vanguard defeated General Ottinger on 20th January, at Szolnok, and three days afterwards at Czegléd, and threw him back upon Pesth. No willing tool of despotic power can be looked upon otherwise than with feelings of disgust; but how shall we express our loathing of a man like Ottinger, who, a Hungarian by birth, had sworn to obey the constitution of his country, had for some time acted as Hungarian War Minster, had commanded the army sent against Jellachich, but who, after all, went over to the enemy, and bore arms against his fatherland?

Amid these successful exploits, General Dembinski appeared at Perczel's head quarters, authorised to take under his command a division of the army, and to make a diversion with it. But Perczel feeling dissatisfied at this diminution of his forces, and viewing the step as betokening a want of confidence in his

management, resigned the command entirely, gave the whole army up to Dembinski, and retired to Debreczin, where he received the Hungarian military cross of merit, of the second class; similar distinctions were conferred at the same time upon Vether, Guyon, and Görgey, though the last-mentioned rather deserved a court-martial for his disobedience, than any decoration for his conduct.

After the loss of the battle of Kápolna, the government turned its eyes towards the approved leader, Perczel, and after repeated solicitation he undertook the command of the Bács-Bánát troops. On the 17th of March he arrived at Szeged, and found only a small remnant of the army which he had formerly led, for the main body was elsewhere serving under Damjanics and Vécsey.

The country so left exposed had been overrun and terribly devastated by the Servians, and besides that large numbers of Austrians were quartered there under Nugent and Theodorovick. The former had drawn lines around Petervárad, and extended his operations as far as Zombor, while the latter stretched his outposts to Szegedin, and in-

tended to unite with Jellachich, who was then stationed at Félegyháza. To these numerous forces Perczel could oppose only five battalions of infantry and two squadrons of hussars, for he could not rely upon 10,000 insurrectionists armed with scythes and hatchets: yet he began the offensive on the 22nd March, and defeated Theodorovick and the Servians at Szöreg, Mada, and Zenta, taking three redoubts, two cannons, several ammunition carts, and about 500 prisoners. After which, without delay, he broke through the enemy near Verbasz, advanced as far as Petervárad, and saved that important fortress from the fate to which the treachery of the officers had nearly exposed it. Two generals and ninety officers, who either openly or secretly were favorably disposed to Austria, were expelled, and to make all sure, one of the brothers of Perczel was appointed Governor.

Returning thence he defeated the Servians at Sz. Iván, Kula, and Verbász, and captured two guns with two standards. As he approached, Nugent with 6,000 regular troops retired from Zombor over the Dráva, upon which the Hungarian general directed his

march towards Sz. Támás. That strongly fortified place was regarded by the Servians as impregnable, for during the preceding summer several attacks directed against it by the Austrian generals (who, however, were playing the part of traitors), had been repulsed. On the 3rd April, Perczel attacked these Servian entrenchments, and after less than three hours' obstinate fighting, the three coloured flag waved over the blood-stained ramparts, several thousand Servians were killed in the engagement, 2,000 were made prisoners, and eight guns, with five standards were taken. And even if the garrison in that place was not so strong as in the previous summer, yet its capture in so short a time must remain one of the brightest leaves in the wreath of the courageous general, and the more so as his troops were fewer than those which had heretofore attempted the assault of Sz. Támás.

However, it is clear that the Austrian generals who had been sent to storm the place did not go heartily to work, otherwise this little Servian stronghold could have been taken long ago; for the attack made by the honest and gallant General Mészárós failed through other causes.

No other action, even though in itself more brilliant, could have raised Perczel higher in public estimation and in his own, than the storming of Sz. Tamás. For the rapidity with which he carried out his plans at once vindicated his previous charges, and convicted the Austrian generals of treachery, while throughout the whole country the people broke out into universal songs of joy, at the fall of that hated and blood-thirsty place, and hailed the victor as the avenger of thousand-fold miseries, as the redeemer from Servian butchery and unprecedented miseries, as the restorer of fugitive families to their homes!

But the demolition of that hostile fortress brought other important results; various fortified places such as Turia and Földvár, capitulated, and the Servian population of the Bács country, laying down their arms, received a general amnesty.

On the 7th April, Perczel stormed the so-called Roman fortifications, and captured nine cannons with seven standards. Three days afterwards the enemy met with a check at Káts, and lost one cannon: they tried to revenge themselves on the 11th, but were

repulsed in a night attack upon Villova and Mokrin, and shortly afterwards the whole Csajkás district, with the exception of Titel, was brought under subjection to the Government.

The moderation which the victorious conqueror displayed in the exercise of power is testified, not only by the amnesty which he granted to the seditious population, but also by the manner in which he organised the district, for it had previously been under military rule. He substituted in place of the former oppressive condition, a civil administration, based upon freedom of election. Even the Sclavonic newspaper could not refuse to acknowledge and admire proceedings so favourable to their people, and yet the general who acted in this noble way has been accused by his enemies of cruelty, and of sacrificing every thing to Magyar prejudices.

After these victories, Perczel turned towards the Tisza (Theiss), in order to attack the Austrian General Theodorovick and the Servians of the Banat. He made a diversion against Török-Becse, took the entrenchments at O-Becse, and crossed the Tisza, masking

his real projects by various manœuvres; and on the 22nd April, between Kikinda and Mokrin, he defeated the Servians who formed the "Holy Army," which had been called out and sent forth by Archbishop Rajasics, fifteen thousand strong, with eight field-pieces. After a terrible slaughter the "Holy Army" was completely routed, and more than two thousand of the insurgents were made prisoners.

Without any delay the conquering general went on to meet the Austrians under Theodorovic and Colonel Puffer, a pupil of Radetzki, the enemy numbered twenty-four thousand against seven thousand Hungarians, yet they were totally defeated in three battles, namely, on the 24th April at Basahid, two days later at Melencze, and on the 7th of May at Uzdin. The Hungarian army was insignificant in numbers but undaunted in the fight, and was now becoming used to victory. In these battles the Austrians lost six cannons and three standards.

These losses diminished the Austrian ranks considerably; their troops were scattered, and Theodorovick himself fled with the remains of

his army across the Danube to Syrmien, whereupon Perczel advanced as far as Pancsova.

Six weeks had been sufficient for this energetic and patriotic man to obtain such signal success. A great part of the Bánát, the whole of Bács, and the Csajkás district, with the exception of Titel, were regained, and the Servians to the number of 100,000 had fled into that narrow corner of land which lies at the junction of the Tisza and the Danube. Perczel pardoned them all and sent them home; this was another of his "cruel" acts. He then devoted his whole time to arrange the administration of the military frontier district in the Bánát; and as the population was mixed he maintained the German as the official language.

During this campaign Perczel entered into friendly relations with Bem, the chief of the Transylvanian army, who was advancing from Erdély (Transylvania), to conquer the Bánát. These two generals had many personal interviews to their mutual satisfaction; the veteran Pole here conceived the highest opinion of his Hungarian colleague, and maintained that opinion till death.

Amid these triumphs news arrived that Görgey had been appointed War Minister, besides being allowed to retain command of the army on the Upper Danube, and the intelligence filled Perczel with lively indignation; he had long before accused Görgey of incapacity as well as of treason: but his warnings were in vain, probably because he gave vent to his feelings with too much violence, and so diminished the credit which might otherwise have been attached to them; besides he neglected to keep up communication with his own political friends in parliament, whereas Görgey kept his partisans well informed, urged them to act upon the Government—left no stone unturned, and sometimes gained more advantages by the stroke of the pen than his rival could secure by a well-fought action upon the field of battle.

Perczel was relying upon a consciousness of approved patriotism, and priding himself upon real military superiority; the other profited by his neglect to advance himself at headquarters, and was promoted to the important office of Minister at War, caring little for the indignation of a rival who was furious at

being superseded by an incapable general and a traitor to boot. For a second time he sent in his resignation, but was persuaded by the ministry to moderate his anger and to continue in the service of his country.

About the middle of May he returned from the Bánát to the Bács county, where, besides his former enemies, he came up with Jellachich, who after the defeat of the Austrians at Isaszeg, had gone south with from twelve to fourteen thousand men. He sent dispatch after dispatch to the Government begging for reinforcements, and stating that the force of the enemy, already superior to his own, had been rendered still more overwhelming by the accession of Jellachich: but Görgey was head of the war-office, and not a single man was sent to aid. The enemy's cavalry was almost equal in numbers to the whole force at Perczel's command, and in a flat country that advantage was necessarily considerable; yet the Hungarian general maintained his position with much success against the united forces of the Austrians and the Servians, and repeatedly prevented them from crossing the Tisza or the Danube. If he obtained no decisive victory,

he held them in check, and obliged them to acknowledge the bravery of the Hungarians. On the 4th of June, he impetuously attacked an Austrian division which was besieging Petervárad, and was strongly entrenched from Karlovitz to Kamenitz; he stormed five enclosed redoubts, took three cannons, and spiked fourteen, captured one standard, and killed one thousand Austrians.

Three days afterwards he engaged Jellachich at Káty, who had debouched from Titel, in order to cut off the retreat towards the Francis canal. This attack was audaciously bold, and was partly forced by circumstances, partly hazarded by confidence in past good fortune. The Hungarian army, which had met with severe losses, was that day opposed to a fourfold superiority of numbers, and in spite of good generalship and determined bravery, was repulsed, but still was able to make good a retreat in tolerable order, although the engagement had taken place upon an extended plain, and the enemy could command four regiments of cavalry against three divisions of hussars. The loss of men upon this occasion was greater than any which Perczel's army had hitherto

sustained, yet the enemy could not boast of having taken either a cannon or a standard. The next day an Austrian column tried to cut off their retreat, but Perczel repulsed the attack, and entrenched himself behind the canal, where by assuming a determined attitude, he was in a position to overawe the superior forces of the enemy.

Here intelligence arrived that the Government had thought proper to accept his resignation definitively; he left the scene of so many victories, and went to Pesth, whither also the Government had transferred the seat of its deliberations.

But Perczel could not remain quiet very long. Görgey had already suffered heavy losses on the Upper Danube, and was in face of two hundred thousand Russians, who were overrunning the land. General Vetter, who had succeeded Perczel in the command of the Southern army, had withdrawn his troops behind the Tisza. In this threatening state of affairs, the Government again turned to Perczel, and requested him to organise a new army upon the Tisza, and he, forgetting all personal mortifications at the call of his country,

hastened to Czegléd to undertake the work which had been committed to him. Within eight days he had organised several battalions and a cavalry brigade four thousand strong. This was the third corps which he had raised since the commencement of his military career.

After the arrival of the troops under Wysocky and Dessefy, the army under Perczel's command increased to thirty-five thousand men, part of whom, however, were armed merely with pikes. By a series of able manoeuvres they drove the Russians from Debreczin and Tokay, and then Perczel, to assist the advance of Görgey's forces, marched as far as Hatvan. On the 20th of July, he had a cavalry skirmish at Tura, but was obliged to retire before a superior force of Russians. Whilst Görgey went northwards towards Vácz, the Austro-Russian army under Haynau, came down towards Szegedin, where the Government was then sitting, and Perczel received orders to fall back upon the latter place. Great differences of opinion existed as to the best plan of operations, but at length Dembinski was chosen to take the chief command of the forces; and when the enemy had

forced the passage of the Tisza, the new commander fell back upon Temesvár.

Then the government appointed Bem to the chief command, and he hastened from Erdély to Hungary. At Rékas he met with Perczel, and offered the latter a command under him. Perczel thought it his duty to reject that offer, but consented to serve as a volunteer. On the same day, (19th of August) that Bem joined the army, the Austrians attacked the rear-guard; Bem went into the fire, and determined to give battle. Notwithstanding their superior numbers the enemy were driven back, but as Haynau sent forward the Russian reserve-corps under Paniutine, and as Lichtenstein's corps appeared on the flank, Bem sounded a retreat, which was effected in good order, and without much loss. With eight squadrons, and a few field-pieces, Perczel protected the retreat, and held the enemy in check for two hours, but as it was late in the day, and part of the army was dispirited by hunger and fatigue, great confusion arose in passing through a defile, and many of our men were cut down.

The treachery of Görgey annihilated all

hope of further resistance: General Perczel, with his brother Nicolas quitted the country, and repaired to Turkey. Removed from Widdin to Schumla, and thence to Kutajah, this active man languished for two years in exile: he is now, however, on his way to England. His amiable wife, and their two children, shared the hard lot of the prisoner. She also had to suffer the mean vengeance of the Austrian government; during three months she was imprisoned at Posony for the crime of being wife to a noble and patriotic general.

The Austrian newspapers took the greatest possible pains to degrade the name of Perczel, and to bring him down from that elevated position which he has so justly merited. They reproached him with want of military talent, and with brutal cruelty towards the conquered; whereas, on the contrary, with the exception of the battles at Mör and Káty, he defeated both Austrians and Russians in numberless battles and skirmishes, never lost either a cannon or a standard, but took from the enemy forty-six field-pieces, and twenty-eight standards, while, with rare magnanimity, he pardoned one hundred thousand insurgent

Servians, and treated his prisoners with all the forbearance which even honourable and equal enemies could claim. Happily the world knows the Austrian official press, and can appreciate the value of news which appears in such a quarter.

We do not pretend that the generalship of this self-taught and citizen leader was free from blame in all respects, but his numerous victories, against superior force, his rapid achievements, and some extraordinary exploits render him one of the most distinguished captains of modern times.

This worthy patriot and good soldier, was remarkable for genius, promptitude, personal bravery, and what is rarer still, high moral courage, combined with unshaken faithfulness and devotion to Freedom and to Fatherland.

Of those whose names appear in the modern history of Hungary, none knew better how to improve a victory than he did, excepting always, that wonderful man the immortal Bem.

Perczel appears as a strict and sometimes harsh disciplinarian, but never intentionally unjust; and we know, that the severest discipline is

not incompatible with humane conduct. He was decidedly the most revolutionary character in the Hungarian struggle for independence; not blood-thirsty (God forbid), but a friend of downright radical measures, and prompt action. He was enthusiastically devoted to Right and to Freedom, and never forgot as a soldier, his duties as a citizen. He made full claim to the title of a citizen general, while his ardent temperament and intrepidity, often made him speak and act as a soldier in political matters.

He had already achieved a great name in politics before he entered the theatre of war; upon which, however, genius, combined with good fortune, elevated him to a lofty position. If he could have restrained the exuberant ardour of his nature, and have tempered his boldness with discretion, we believe that he would have realized the objects for which he contended so worthily; and if he had been brought into closer communication with Kossuth, especially towards the closing scene, we are convinced that he would have rescued Hungarian indepence, or, at least, have averted the disgraceful catastrophe, produced by Görgey.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FORTIFICATIONS.

A. Casemated blockhouse for 1000 men.

B. Hornwork (*ouvrage à cornes*), defended in front and on the flanks with casemated ramparts, but behind only with weak loopholed walls, known as "the Star Fort."

C. Four-sided fort with massive ramparts, feeble wall-work, and a shallow ditch.

D. Upper Waag—bridgehead (*tête-de-pont du Waag*), with bomb-proof rooms on the left flank, which however were confined and insufficient for the garrison.

E. Old fortress built in the year 1550, consisting of three fronts and three tenailles. The tenailles which enclose the point of the island, form the so-called "Point-bastion," in the bomb-proof passages of which almost all our powder was stored. It is almost superfluously provided with bomb-proof chambers, both under and in the ramparts.

F. New fortress built in 1673. Originally a crown-work (*ouvrage à couronne*), with two lunettes upon the left flank. The left half-bastion and the middle bastion protected by counterguards, and with ravelins lying in front of the curtain. The right half-bastion was defended by a continued counter-guard (*enveloppe*), which extends from the right flank, then bends in the form of a tenaille to the Waag, runs on to the confluence of the stream, and ends at the point of the island in the form of a *flêche*. The masonry of all the advanced works is

bad. The middle bastion comprises a bomb-proof powder store. On the right flank is a steam flour-mill. Parallel with the rampart runs a bomb-proof building for the soldiers of the garrison, of three stories reckoning the cellars. The bomb-proof dwelling of the garrison would oblige the besiegers to continue firing even after they had effected a breach, and then to take it by storm, especially as it is connected, right and left, with the flanks of the crown-work, which rise up from the point of juncture in the form of a cavalier.*

G. The Palatinal (afterwards Kossuth) line, consists of four fronts thoroughly casemated with loop-holed walls for the defence of the ditch. The line contains bomb-proof dwellings, roomy and well ventilated.

The bastions were denominated according to the following numbers:—From one to twenty-five the fortifications were partly redoubts and partly lunettes. The latter, excepting numbers twenty-three, twenty-four, and twenty-five, were stockaded. In number four there was a half-finished, and in number eight a complete Müller blockhouse.

Numbers twenty-six to forty-one were shore-batteries with pieces of various calibre.

Numbers forty-two and forty-three were mortar-batteries; forty-four and forty-five were *flêches*, necessitated by the rising nature of the ground.

The batteries erected on the first Austrian parallel in the spring of 1849, are marked *a*, *b*, *c*, *d* and *e*. Besides which they completely armed the redoubts numbers four and eight, and planted batteries both for shells and roundshots upon the Monostor.

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* On the point of the middle bastion, was the figure of a virgin holding a laurel wreath in her right hand, and underneath the motto, "*Nec arte nec marte.*"

HINTS ON HUNGARIAN PRONUNCIATION.

I have thought it desirable to lay before my readers a few hints to guide them in the pronunciation of Hungarian words.

The vowels are pronounced as follows:—

a the sound of English *o* in Moll-Poll.
á as *a* in *father*.
e as *e* short in *get*.
é like the French *é*.
i like *i* in *hit*.
í as *ee* in *heel*.
o as *o* in *for*.
ó as *o* in *note*.
ö like the German ö in *Körper*.
ő like the German ö in *Höhle*.
u like the English *u* in *bull*.
ú like *oo* in *soon*.
ü like the German ü in *Hütte*.
ű like the German ü in *kühn*.

Thus the vowels which are not marked, or which have dots (··) are short; those which have one or two strokes (′) are long.

The consonants have mostly the same force as in English, with the exception of those which will now be explained; we may however remark by the way,

that *j* has the force of *y*, as for example, *jár* is pronounced *yahr;* and that *q*, *w*, *x* occur only in words of foreign origin.

The distinctive peculiarities of the consonants are therefore as follows:—

c, or as it was more anciently written *c z*, is the same as English *ts;* thus *Ignác* or *Ignácz* pronounced *Ignahts* (Ignatius):

cs pronounced *ch*; as *csók*, choke.

s = sh; as *sir* pronounced *sheer*.

sz = s; as *Szent Péter* pronounced Sent Payter (St. Peter.

z s = French *j* in *jardin*, or the English *s* in *pleasure*.

g is always hard as in *go*, *get;* but it is modified in sound when followed by *y*, for *y* appears only after the following letters, *g*, *l*, *n*, *t*, thus:—

gy = *d'* or *d* followed by an initial *y*: yet the ear catches something of the sound of *g*; for instance, Nagy Sándor sounds to a foreigner like Nod-Shandore, or Nog-Shandore, or Nodj-Shandore, but not Nodge-Shandor. So Magyar has a sound varying between Mad-yar Mag-yar.

ly = French *ll* in *bataillon*, *bouteille*.

ny = Spanish ñ in *Coruña*, or the French *gn* in *Campagne*, as Batthányi.

ty = French *tié* in *amitié*; *atya* pronounced *at-ya*.

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CORRIGENDA.

Page	Line				
130,	21,	*for*	Tala, . , . .	*read*	Tata.
139,	6,	,.	Kmdetty, . . .	„	Kmetty.
143,	3,	„	Schemed, ...	„	Sempte.
144,	4-26,	„	Knedzich, ...	„	Knezich.
155,	17,	„	Görgey, Central Chancellery,	„	Görgey's Central Chancellery.
158,	6,	„	Bouskay	„	Bocskay.
211,	13,	„	*five hundred*, . . .	„	*five hundred thousand*,
224,	19-21,	„	*weight*, ...	„	*cwt.*
227,	12,	„	Baiskay, ...	„	Bocskay.
228,	13-22,	„	Baiskay	„	Bocskay.
230,	7,	„	mark , ...	„	mask.
230,	11,	„	war of, ...	„	war and of.
231,	3,	„	defenceless, . . .	„	defenders.
235,	6,	„	take, ...	„	cover.
235,	12,	„	paid, for the . . .	„	paid, as the
236,	9,	„	for,.	„	despite
254,	23,	„	Senard, ...	„	Sexard
257,	15,	„	unison, ...	„	union.
263,	13,	„	Sukoyö, ...	„	Sukoró.
270,	9,	„	Mada, ...	„	Ada.
272,	25,	„	Káts, ...	„	Káty.
282,	20,	„	Mör, ...	„	Mór.
286,	17,	„	The bastions were denominated according to the following numbers:—	„	The five bastions of the Palatinal line, are marked by Roman numbers.

STRUCTURE AND BEAUTIES

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WITH

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

HUNGARIAN LITERATURE.

BY

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MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Thaly, Sigismund

The fortress of Komárom (Comorn), during the war of independence in Hungary in 1848 - 1849

London 1852

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